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ABSTRACT

This theme issue of the serial "Educational Foundations" contains five articles devoted to the topic of "Politics and the Schools." In "Resisting Racial Awareness: How Teachers Understand the Social Order from Their Racial, Gender, and Social Class Locations," Christine E. Sleeter discusses the conception of multicultural education of 30 teachers, 26 of whom are white, and concludes that teachers integrate information about race provided in multicultural teacher education programs into the knowledge they already have, much more than they reconstruct that knowledge. Alan Wieder's "Afrocentrisms: Capitalists, Democratics, and Liberationist Portraits" reviews the multidimensional aspects of Afrocentric curricula. Concha Delgado-Gaitan and Nadeen T. Ruiz's "Parent Mentorship: Socializing Children to School Culture" examines three common models of parental involvement programs: (1) family impact model; (2) school impact model; and (3) cooperative system model. In "Dismantling Educational Apartheid: Case Studies from South Africa," Beverly Lindsay explores the results of apartheid on contemporary educational conditions by investigating six local schools in South Africa. In the final article, "Institutional Inertia to Achieving Diversity: Transforming Resistance into Celebration," Nancy P. Greenman, and others, discuss structural barriers to cultural diversity in higher education. (Author/CK)

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Contents

Introduction:
Politics and the Schools 3
Louis Castenell

Resisting Racial Awareness:
How Teachers Understand the Social Order from Their Racial, Gender, and Social Class Locations 7
Christine E. Sleeter

Afrocentrisms:
Capitalist, Democratic, and Liberationist Portraits 33
Alan Wieder

Parent Mentorship:
Socializing Children to School Culture 45
Concha Delgado-Gaitan and Nadeen T. Ruiz

Dismantling Educational Apartheid:
Case Studies from South Africa 71
Beverly Lindsay

Institutional Inertia to Achieving Diversity:
Transforming Resistance into Celebration 89
Nancy P. Greenman, Ellen B. Kimmel, Helen M. Bannan, and Blanche Radford-Curry

Editorial Overview

Educational Foundatons seeks to help fulfill the stated mission of the American Educational Studies Association to enhance scholarship in and among the educational foundations disciplines by providing a vehicle for publication of articles and essays which feature analysis of the foundations, of foundations methodology, of applications of such methodology to key issues of the day, and of significant research which evolves from and unifies the foundations disciplines, all focusing on the interdisciplinary nature of the educational foundations fields.

Educational Foundations seeks articles and essays in four primary areas:

1. Exposition on the nature of the educational foundations--essays exploring the foundations, highlighting definition, interrelationships, strengths, difficulties, and other aspects of the combined fields.

2. Application of the foundations disciplines to an issue of significance--collections of articles around a specified theme, bringing to bear the nature of the various foundations disciplines on such themes. Information concerning themes for future issues of the journal may be obtained from the co-editors.

3. Methodology--articles exploring methodological issues of the foundations fields, stressing similarities and differences among the disciplines.

4. Research--articles describing or reporting on new research in the foundations fields, with emphasis on interdisciplinary aspects of such research.

Contributions to ***Educational Foundations*** are solicited from members of the American Educational Studies Association as well as from all other scholars in the foundations of education and related fields of study. While the journal is open to submissions from all interested scholars, the standards for review and acceptance of articles and essays are stringent. Submissions should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*, with a suggested length of 25-30 doubled-spaced pages, and be sent in triplicate to: Jane Van Galen, Co-Editor, ***Educational Foundations***, Foundations of Education Office, Fedor Hall, Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio 44555. When an article is accepted, authors are asked to submit the final version as an ascii textfile on computer disk.

Introduction: Politics and the Schools

By Louis Castenell

Louis Castenell is a professor and dean of the College of Education, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio. He served as guest editor for this issue of Educational Foundations.

This special Spring 1992 issue of *Educational Foundations* critically examines politics and the schools. The theme of this volume is not coincidental to the current rhetoric of educational change. A number of recent studies have investigated the relationship between ideological struggle and the restructuring of schools (Collins, 1971; Spring, 1986; Hare, 1987; and Trent, 1990). In general, such efforts have concluded that episodic educational reforms are political, with little chance of long term success. Orlick (1989) cites two reasons for this massive failure. First, reforms have been purely cosmetic, and do not impact instructional strategies; and second, reforms have been intrinsically inferior, relying on simplistic solutions to complex educational and social problems.

In contrast, the articles assembled in this volume go beyond ideological rhetoric to provide an analytical perspicuity which engages us in a reasonable, critical view of politics and the schools. As we study recent social indications, we are daunted by the challenges. For instance, national surveys have concluded:

Hispanics are most likely to drop out of school by the age of 17.
At each grade level, a larger percentage of Hispanics than other groups are enrolled below grade level.
Hispanics have the highest high school dropout rate, approximately 43 percent.
More black men (23 percent) are in prison, on parole, or on probation than in college (19.6 percent).
The number of black children reared in fatherless homes is up to 40 percent.

Christine E. Sleeter's "Resisting Racial Awareness: How Teachers Understand the Social Order from Their Racial, Gender, and Social Class Locations" discusses the conception of multicultural education of 30 teachers, 26 of whom are white. She organizes these teachers into three groups--conservative, liberal, and radical structural. Sleeter concludes that teachers integrate information about race provided in multicultural teacher education programs into the knowledge they already have, much more than they reconstruct that knowledge.

Alan Wieder's "Afrocentrisms: Capitalist, Democratic, and Liberationist Portraits" reviews the multidimensional aspects of Afrocentric curriculums. He presents a variety of Afrocentrisms which shed much needed light on this important issue. Wieder elevates the discourse from a simplistic, singular notion of exclusiveness to transformatic notions embracing numerous approaches, each sharing a common thread; i.e., the need for the connection of African/African-American history and culture to the struggle against racism and for equality that still exists in America.

Concha Delgado-Gaitan and Nadeen T. Ruiz's "Parent Mentorship: Socializing Children to School Culture" posits that parents, in particular Hispanic parents, are the primary social and cultural brokers in the lives of their children. The authors examine three common models of parental involvement programs: 1) the Family Impact Model, 2) the School Impact Model, and 3) the Cooperative System Model. They observe how well-organized parental educational programs improved learning outcomes. As parents were empowered to engage teachers in discussions pertaining to the school systems, their abilities to mentor children at home made the significant difference.

Beverly Lindsay's "Dismantling Educational Apartheid: Case Studies from South Africa" seeks to explicate contemporary educational conditions resulting from apartheid and its sociopolitical manifestations. Her six case studies of local schools investigate the varied conditions people of color must endure to receive formal education controlled by the government. Whether one is appalled by conditions of racism, class, and/or sexism, it becomes unavoidable not to see the striking similarities between South Africa and the United States of America. Lindsay's descriptions of South African schools clearly parallel circumstances in American urban school districts.

Nancy P. Greenman, Ellen B. Kimmel, Helen M. Bannan, and Blanche Radford-Curry's "Institutional Inertia to Achieving Diversity: Transforming Resistance into Celebration" directs our attentions to structural barriers to cultural diversity in higher education. Their explication of how individuals and institutions work in unison to maintain the status quo is insightful. They draw upon the seminal work of many scholars. The authors provide ways all of us can challenge and transform ourselves and the academics we serve.

This volume restates the necessity of breaking the link between poverty and school failure. Since urban school districts are becoming increasingly minority, our failure to understand how racism undergirds educational institutions will ultimately lead to further racial polarization. The politics of transformation must replace the politics of assimilation. It is our hope that this special issue will be useful to all change agents.

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Resisting Racial Awareness: How Teachers Understand the Social Order from Their Racial, Gender, and Social Class Locations

By Christine E. Sleeter

Christine E. Sleeter is a professor in the Department of Education, the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Kenosha.

As student populations become increasingly racially and culturally diverse and the teaching force becomes increasingly White, interest in training teachers in multicultural education is growing. Many educators conceptualize this task as helping them "unlearn" negative attitudes about race, and develop positive attitudes and a knowledge base about race, various racial groups, and classroom applications. I will argue that the task is more complex than that: as White women, many of whom have worked themselves up from working class origins, teachers already have

considerable knowledge about social stratification in America, and it tends to be fairly conservative. They integrate information about race provided in multicultural teacher education programs into the knowledge they already have, much more than they reconstruct that knowledge.[1]

Various theorists have examined teachers as upwardly mobile members of the working class,[2] as women,[3] and as working class women,[4] focusing on how they construct their understanding of reality from these social class and gender locations. Teacher race has been examined mainly by comparing how White teachers and teachers of color interact with and teach children of color.[5] Teacher race is seen as an issue mainly when teachers display overt prejudice toward children of color, expect less of them than they do of White children, or fail to understand them. In this paper, I will use data from a two-year ethnographic study of 30 teachers, 26 of whom are White, who participated in a staff development program in multicultural education, to illustrate how social class and gender life experiences inform White teachers' understanding of the social order that they use to construct an understanding of race.

Theoretical Perspectives about Social Inequality

I will examine the teachers' perspectives about social inequality and multicultural education in relation to three theoretical perspectives: conservatism, liberalism, and radical structuralism. How one interprets the basis of social inequality informs one's interpretation of multicultural education, and what one chooses to attend to, remember, perceive as important, and attempt to use.

From a conservative perspective, the good society places as few restrictions as necessary on individuals, allowing them to strive for whatever they want. All individuals except those who are believed to be unfit, such as law-breakers or mentally ill people, should have an equal opportunity to compete with each other. Government should restrict individual competition minimally, but private institutions such as the family and the church should "instill a sense of personal discipline, courage, and motivation" into people and curb or control immoral temptations--"the mistakes that people make."[6] Those institutions that regulate society should seek to preserve the best of historic tradition, and should be controlled by "good people: by the natural aristocracy of talent, breeding, and very likely, wealth."[7]

Inequality is viewed as natural, resulting mainly from individual differences in natural endowment and effort. Cornell West summarized conservative explanations for the oppression of African Americans, and by extension, other groups. The sociobiology explanation for inequality holds that racial minority groups (and other low status groups such as women) are genetically inferior or different. The culturalist explanation holds that "the character and contents of Afro-American culture inhibit Black people from competing with other people in American society"[8]; this problem can be corrected by replacing the culture of a "disadvan-

taged" group with one more suited to successful competition in public institutions. The market explanation holds that employers and other members of dominant groups discriminate against individuals on the basis of tastes (preferences or prejudices), such as aversion to Black people; this could be corrected by modifying people's tastes to make them more inclusive.

Liberalism shares conservatism's orientation toward competition among individuals for mobility. However, it rejects the sociobiologist explanations for inequality and the idea of a "natural aristocracy." Reform liberals have some sympathy with claims by "disadvantaged" groups that many social institutions restrict their opportunities.[9] For example, Alison Jaggar explained,

> Liberal feminists believe that the treatment of women in contemporary society violates, in one way or another, all of liberalism's political values, the values of equality, liberty, and justice. Their most frequent complaint is that women in contemporary society suffer discrimination on the basis of sex. By this, they mean that certain restrictions are placed on women as a group, without regard to their individual wishes, interests, abilities, or merits.[10]

Reform liberals support state interventions that try to ensure that people will be treated as individuals regardless of group membership. Liberals also support state interventions, such as affirmative action, that attempt to redress effects of past discrimination, believing that one day they will no longer be needed and individuals will be able to compete as equals. Ultimately, liberals believe that cultural, attitudinal, and institutional dysfunctions that block the strivings of individuals can be corrected.

Radical structuralists reject the individual as the main unit of analysis and focus on competition among and inequality across groups. They characterize society as involving continuous struggle among competing groups: "There is no ultimately good society, only a continual struggle to overcome specific obstacles to human fulfillment as these become apparent."[11] Inequality across groups is more significant than inequality among individuals, and results from group conflict much more than natural endowment or individualistic factors. As Martin Carnoy explained,

> The struggle of dominated groups to change the conditions that oppress them and the attempts of dominant groups to reproduce the conditions of their dominance are the key to understanding changes in the economy, in social relations, and in the culture. These changes, in turn, are reflected in state policies and in public schooling, both prime targets of conflict.[12]

Most social organizations, including the state, are structured primarily by groups with the most power, and operate to their benefit. Therefore, inequality cannot be addressed effectively through solutions that alter changes for individu-

als. In addition, the state cannot be relied upon to serve the interests of oppressed groups; oppressed groups themselves must mobilize to challenge and restructure specific institutions that thwart their own interests. Many radical structuralists view education as crucial to the process of social change, since through education young people can learn to examine social relations and learn to act collectively to create a more just social system.

Multicultural education rejects conservatism, particularly biological and cultural deprivation explanations for inequality. But it is neither clearly liberal nor radical structural. In England, multiculturalists, who hold a liberal position, debate with antiracists, who hold a radical structural position.[13] In the United States, the debate is not so clearly demarcated, and the field has been criticized as growing out of liberalism.[14] While the field of multicultural education generally has used the language of liberalism, as I have argued elsewhere I see it more closely linked to radical structuralism because of the concerns it addresses, the historical context from which it emerged, and assumptions of its main advocates, a large proportion of whom are educators of color.[15]

Multicultural education in the United States originated in the racial debates and protests of the 1960s.[16] In its inception, multicultural education was connected with a broad social and political racial struggle that was rooted in a radical structuralist understanding of oppression. Multicultural education addressed school practices with the understanding that reform of schools was linked with other movements outside education. Must of the language and conceptual work in multicultural education is drawn from ethnicity theory (which is based on analysis of the experience of European immigrant groups), however, rather than a theory of racial oppression (such as internal colonialism or a class-racial theory), mainly because of the wide use and mainstream acceptability of ethnicity theory. Discussion often revolves around pluralism versus assimilation, ethnic identity, and prejudice, which are themes in ethnicity theory. To teachers, the language of ethnicity theory may make multicultural education seem less threatening than more radical language would, but it also deflects attention away from structural inequalities in the distribution of power and wealth.

Background of the Study

This article probes teachers' understanding of multicultural education and society in general. Data are drawn from a two-year study of 30 teachers who voluntarily participated in a staff development program in multicultural education.[17] The teachers were from two contiguous school districts; they taught preschool through high school (most taught grades 1-6), and were from 18 schools in which at least one-third of the students were of color (mostly African American or Latino) or from low-income families. They had taught between four and 29 years; the average was 14 years. Twenty-six were White, three were African

American, and one was Mexican-American; 24 were women and six were men. Seven taught special education, two taught English as a Second Language, and the rest taught in the general education program.

During school year 1987-1988, the teachers were released to attend nine all-day sessions held at a staff development center located between the two school districts; they also attended three after-school sessions and a dinner meeting. During school year 1988-1989, 18 teachers chose to continue to participate, and attended five all-day sessions at the staff development center. A list of session topics is included in Table 1. The topics were selected, partly on the basis of interests teachers expressed in the first session, by a steering group composed of African American, Latino, and White educators from the local community and university. The sessions were led mainly by consultants with expertise in particular topics. Although the sessions differed considerably from one another, most used a combination of lecture, discussion, and practical application.

Table 1

Schedule of Sessions

First Year

Full-Day Session #1: Introduction, Assessment of Interests
Full-Day Session #2: Building Home-School Partnerships
After-School Session #1: Star Power Simulation
Full-Day Session #3: Race, Ethnicity, Social Class, and Gender in Society
Full-Day Session #4: Ethnic Learning Styles and Racism Awareness
Full-Day Session #5: Community Resources
After-School Session #2: Discussion
Full-Day Session #6: Working With Curriculum and Instruction
After-School Session #3: Teachers as Leaders
Full-Day Session #7: Cooperative Learning
Full-Day Session #8: Library Resources for Multicultural Education
Full-Day Session #9: Drop-Out Prevention Programs, Motivation and Self-Esteem, and Sharing

Second Year

Full-Day Session #1: Action Research and School-Based Change
Full-Day Sessions #2-4: Teachers selected 3 from among the following: Working with Your Staff, Making Curriculum Multicultural, Cooperative Learning, Building Self-Esteem, Parent Involvement
Full-Day Session #5: Wrapping up and Organizing For Change

For example, session number 3 began with a two-hour multimedia presentation by an administrator from a local district, describing changing demographics in the United States and local region, and suggesting implications of these changes for how Americans define ourselves. After a short break, a university professor contrasted Euro-American and African American struggles for assimilation and success in the United States, addressing the question: if White ethnic groups were successful, why are Americans of color and particularly African Americans not following the same pattern? After lunch, another university professor discussed gender differences in how people attribute their successes, and research on how teacher-student interaction patterns in the classroom reinforce these gender differences. Then an hour was provided for open discussion; the teachers talked mainly about sexism. For the last half-hour, teachers viewed a videotape on bilingual education, which related directly to the morning presentations.

Session number 4 was not as crowded with information. The morning was facilitated by a university professor who discussed the creation of culturally compatible classrooms. She began with a lecture on achievement and learning, and how culture affects information processing strategies. She then involved teachers in an activity in which they drew their ideal classroom using crayons and newsprint. The facilitator had teachers share their drawings, then used them to discuss cognitive styles among children from racial minority groups, especially African Americans, and how their styles conflict with most classrooms. She included in her talk many specific recommendations for teachers. After lunch, a panel of three professional women of color discussed their own personal experiences with racism as they grew up. The panel was followed by a discussion in which the teachers reacted to what they said and asked questions.

The sessions themselves drew most heavily on the language of liberalism, although some facilitators also drew on conservative ideas about social class, and some drew lightly on radical structuralism. Although in session number 3 the European ethnic experience was contrasted with that of African Americans, many concepts used in other sessions reflected those of the ethnicity paradigm.

Research was conducted using a variety of methods, mainly classroom observation and interview. Three one-hour observations were conducted in teachers' classrooms during the first year, and two during the second year, totalling 121 hours. In the classroom observations, data were recorded on time use and instructional strategies, curriculum-in-use, teacher-student interaction patterns, student seating patterns, classroom decor, instructional materials, and decision-making patterns. Most of the staff development sessions were also observed. Each classroom observation was accompanied by an interview; a total of 125 interviews were conducted.

Over the two-year period, observable changes in classroom teaching were fairly limited. I will describe them here briefly, to provide a context for examining how teachers defined multicultural education. The curriculum and room decor in

most classrooms was about as multicultural, at the start of the program, as published textbooks are.[18] About half of the teachers tried using or developing some multicultural curriculum on a sporadic basis, mainly incorporating "little things" into existing lessons. Eight wrote and taught one new unit or some lessons, mainly in elective subject areas such as art, music, and home economics, or in special education. Four used a multicultural calendar they had received in the program, and six taught one or two lessons from books they acquired in the program. The quantity and quality of classroom decorations representing human diversity stayed much the same over the two years, although about half reported preparing displays with diversity in mind, to which they drew my attention during observations.

To respond to student learning styles, half of the teachers gradually increased their use of cooperative learning and cut back on individual seatwork and whole-class recitation, which dominated their teaching. While at the beginning of the program they spent an average of 11 percent of observed time using small groupwork, by the end this proportion had doubled. They reported that students found cooperative learning much more interesting than individual seatwork and seemed to learn better when it was used. Five teachers reported supplementing print, such as using more oral reading.

Most of the teachers interacted with students in a very warm and friendly manner throughout the two years, but there were some changes in their distribution of attention to students. Over the two years, with the exception of one observation following a session on gender patterns in teacher-student interaction, boys received a disproportionate share of questions and praise (e.g., in the first observation, boys comprised 54 percent of the students but received 61 percent of the questions and 68 percent of the praise). At the beginning of the study, teachers distributed questions and praise in proportion to racial representation in the classroom. Over the first year, they gave a growing proportion to African American students, and particularly African American boys. But by the second year, patterns were about the same as they had been at the beginning of the study.

One-third of the teachers reported trying new strategies to improve home-school communication, mainly sending or phoning home positive messages, getting parents to help more with homework, and looking for ways to make parents feel welcome in the building. Five teachers worked on long-range plans to strengthen home-school relationships; their work was inspired by other involvements in their buildings, although they used ideas they had gained in the program.

Although some observable changes occurred, the program's impact on classroom teaching was fairly limited. This was not because most of the teachers found it useless. Teachers frequently commented on how "excellent" the consultants were, and how much they enjoyed the sessions. Although some felt they were getting few ideas they could use in their classrooms, several said they found sessions to be practical and "solution-oriented," and many described the program

with unqualified enthusiasm.

During one of the interviews, 26 teachers were asked to discuss their goals for teaching and how they saw multicultural education contributing to those goals. In other interviews, teachers were asked to discuss their own personal and professional backgrounds, and their reactions to the staff development sessions. Data for the discussion below are drawn from these interviews. I first discuss how the teachers defined multicultural education in relationship to their goals for teaching. I then examine teachers' life experiences as Whites, women, and upwardly mobile members of the working class to show how these experiences informed their understanding of multicultural education.

How the Teachers Saw Multicultural Education

I categorized their perspectives on multicultural education into four groups: those who saw it as irrelevant, those who saw it as human relations, those who saw it as building self-esteem among out-groups, and those whose perspectives defied classification.

Conservatism: Multicultural Education as Irrelevant

Seven teachers saw multicultural education as irrelevant to their work. They described their main goals as promoting academic achievement and individual development; two flatly stated that their main goal was to get students to perform at grade level. Those who also discussed individual development defined it within the parameters of grade level achievement. For example:[19]

> We have the district goal that they must attain certain things before they're promoted, but each individual then besides that should be getting some goals....Like, if they have reversals, I know one little boy, oh, really a lot of reversals and that was my goal, to make sure that by the end of the year, hopefully, that he would be improving a lot. (5-16-88)

They wanted their students to think, solve problems, and feel confident in their ability to achieve:

> I would like the students to understand that...I am teaching them problem solving through the content approach and processes approach and...thinking on their feet, to know what you should do if in fact you encounter a problem. (5-10-88)
>
> I try to accomplish the goal of having every child leave my class with a spirit of self-confidence, knowing that they can believe in themselves and do whatever they set out to do if they have enough determination and self confidence. (5-18-88)

For the most part, they believed that everyone who works hard can achieve their

goals; they felt optimistic about society. Those at the primary level believed that if they made learning fun and gave students plenty of reinforcement, they would achieve. Secondary level teachers admitted perplexity about some of them; they believed many were failing because they came from families that simply did not encourage and support achievement and learning.

Conservatives view inequality as natural, resulting mainly from individual differences in natural endowment and effort. These teachers who saw multicultural education as irrelevant drew on the culturalist and market explanations for inequality that West described.[20] They described students' homes like the following teacher did:

> Where are they coming from?....What's going on in their brains, you know? Because sometimes I realize how irrelevant it is to stand up here and talk, and I have a very close family,...[my husband and I] have been very strong disciplinarians and we encourage the work ethic....I realize how foolish and presumptuous [it is] to think all these kids are coming from the same thing....Just to have a totally helter skelter house where there is nothing regular and the people who are your parent figures come and go and--you don't know, you know what I mean, just what is going on in their brains and where they are coming from. (5-16-88)

They used the market explanation when trying to be colorblind, wanting **not** to be among those who discriminate unfairly. All seven were White. They did not find multicultural education useful mainly because of its stress on color, believing that acknowledging color or other ascribed characteristics would either reinforce limiting stereotypes or excuse people from performing. They emphasized paying attention to individual needs, not group membership:

> You know, this has been a constant, boring--I have never really thought about Asian Americans or Blacks until I got into a multicultural course. I just treat them as children. (5-18-88)

As long as they saw their own expectations as appropriately high and their treatment of children as caring and unbiased, they did not see themselves as interfering with children's progress, and thus saw no need to change what they were doing. The only use they saw in multicultural education was its insights into culturally-different students that might help them teach more effectively, such as information on learning styles or parent involvement.

Liberalism: Multicultural Education as Human Relations

Six teachers saw multicultural education as human relations. They described two main goals for teaching: promoting academic achievement, and helping students get along with and appreciate each other. For example:

> Academics, I want them to be as near grade level as possible, which for some kids isn't a problem, but for a lot of other kids it is a very big problem....With behavior, it's important for me that they learn to work together, so that's some of the reason I'm doing the cooperative learning. (5-6-88)

They saw multicultural education as relevant to the extent that it gave them strategies for addressing both achievement and interpersonal relations in the classroom. Like the teacher above, they were quite interested in cooperative learning because it can address both goals.

They also expressed some interest in infusing multicultural content into lessons to help students understand each other better, to the extent time would permit without compromising academics. This infusion usually took the form of adding little things "when it comes up." For example:

> We try to talk about different cultures when it comes up. The English curriculum, with literature especially, like Anne Frank. Grammar, not nearly as much. But the calendar idea, putting different days on the board and the holidays, we do things for Women's History and Black History Month. (5-27-88)

In addition, some taught lessons on individual differences to help foster good relationships among students.

These six teachers were all White. But unlike those who saw multicultural education as irrelevant, they were comfortable thinking in terms of race and color, and attached positive feelings and images to racial diversity. They also recognized a connection between race, student self-image, and student-student relationships. As one teacher said:

> You've had these groups going to school together and still have a lack of understanding. (5-27-88)

Therefore, they sought strategies and content to add into their daily lessons that would address these concerns. Their orientation toward children seemed to be very humanistic: personal fulfillment, inner peace, and harmony seemed to be of greater value than mobility or material gain. For example, one described multicultural education as an

> atmosphere...of openness and acceptance. (2-23-88)

Another had served in the Peace Corps and emphasized the tragedy of war in her teaching; and another was active in a peace organization in her personal life.

I categorized these teachers as having a liberal orientation because their discussions of students' home cultures focused on positive as often as negative characteristics, and they did not describe themselves as colorblind. This suggested that they acknowledged worthwhile meaning in racial group membership. In addition, they occasionally criticized conservative national policies such as military build-up, and political leaders such as President Reagan.

Multicultural Education as Helping Members of Out-Groups to Cope

Eight teachers were interested mainly in developing self-esteem among their students and preparing them to survive and cope in a somewhat hostile society, and saw multicultural education as fostering empathy for the personal struggles of society's out-group members. The main feature that distinguished them from those above was that they taught in special programs: English as a Second Language, special education, alternative education, art, and "at-risk" students. With the exception of the art teacher, all of their students were "behind" in one or more areas and were struggling in school. Their goals for students focused on their struggles for success:

> I work a lot on improving their self-image and their self-esteem. And I think that's probably my main goal, and I think that if I accomplish that, the other things will come along, the academics will come along and the social skills will come along. (5-27-88)
>
> The one goal is to help them to identify where they need to work, and help them to be successful,...helping them to realize a little success and then to build on that success. (5-19-88)

These eight teachers (seven White and one African American) saw multicultural education as helping children cope, particularly those who had encountered many difficulties in life:

> There are a number of us who really try to fight all the negative things and so forth, but the negatives have been so many, so powerful. (5-16-88)

They discussed sensitivity to individual needs and feelings, optimism about the worth of those whom others have rejected, and having flexibility for students.

They differed among themselves in their attributions of students' academic difficulties and their theoretical perspectives about social inequality. Their views ranged from conservatism to glimmerings of radical structuralism. For example, an elementary special education teacher saw lower class students' homes as the main source of their difficulties, commenting that:

> I don't know how much love goes on in most of the families, or how much attention they get at home. (5-23-88)

The ESL teachers saw their students' difficulties as stemming from the fact that they were having to learn a new culture; once they learned it, they would be able to compete successfully. Several teachers saw their students as encountering negative experiences in many areas of their lives, including school, due to inflexible attitudes and institutional procedures. A special education teacher saw the whole of society as stacked against her students:

> Our society is basically built on not being able to handle differences. And that's why these kids can't get through school. That's why we have these little red-necked teachers who will not

see anything but their own little box. (5-19-88)

On the basis of her experience in special education, she was beginning to develop a radical structuralist critique of social institutions.

More Complex Perspectives

Five teachers (three White, two African American) discussed multicultural education in ways that were more complex and harder to categorize than the other teachers. These were some of the teachers who had showed the most interest in it; their own insights had come in fits and jumps. They were in the process of active growth, and their discussions were less systematic than those of other teachers. In my interviews with them, which tended to be long, they often responded to questions by discussing in detail a new idea or insight without necessarily integrating it with other comments they had made. At times some of them espoused conservative perspectives, at times all five took liberal perspectives, and some occasionally expressed radical structuralist insights.

For example, an African American teacher's main goals were to teach students what is morally right, and to help them become strong enough to overcome life's inevitable barriers:

> My attitude is right now that in America we are raising a generation of wimps and followers. That's generally the way I feel. Because if we were not,...the drug problem would not be as prevalent as it is. Kids are not strong enough to resist their peers or resist other people who talk them into it. (5-13-88)

Multicultural education meant not sheltering students from tough realities they would face. It also meant believing in the capabilities of children from low-income and minority backgrounds, and helping them develop the moral strength to succeed and do the right thing. His discussions mixed together culturalist explanations of poverty with institutional explanations of racism.

> A White home economics teacher described multicultural education as something that has to be incorporated into everything. (5-13-88)

To think through how to do that, she developed a very creative unit about culture and clothing, which examined the relationship between climate, local cultures, and clothing design. She saw a relationship between multicultural education and not only achievement and intergroup relationships, but also issues such as world hunger, which she was in the process of thinking through how to teach about.

Summary

Most of the teachers' conceptions of multicultural education emphasized individuality and success within the existing social system. They differed from each other mainly in the extent to which they saw race and culture as helpful factors to consider in preparing children to compete successfully. They also differed in

their assessment of their own students' chances for success and their estimate of the kinds of support and help their students needed. Theirs were mainly debates between conservatism and liberalism. Several had adopted the conservative "children-at-risk" discourse, in that they focused on characteristics of students that hinder their success (culturalist explanations of inequality) rather than characteristics of institutions that block attempts to advance:

> I took a course back last fall, I believe, which was...basically understanding at-risk kids and not really multicultural, but you know, they would be included in both of those scenarios. They are at risk, many of them, because of either their background, the level of acceptance they receive from school, or just basic lack of understanding. (11-23-87)

With few exceptions, most of the teachers did not link multicultural education with a collective social movement aimed at redistributing resources across groups. For them, it was a tool for addressing problems they saw in their classrooms: tensions among groups of students, boredom, and failure.

Teachers as White Upwardly-Mobile Women

Most of the teachers were enthusiastic about the program because they were acquiring much new information. What I came to realize, however, was that they were adding that information into conceptions they already had about the workings of the social system, rather than reconstructing those conceptions. Their interpretations of what they were hearing minimized institutional racism and racially-based conflict in society's reward structure.

As Martyn Denscombe and others have argued, teachers' perspectives stem partly from the structure of their work as teachers;[21] I examine their work in detail elsewhere.[22] But in spite of the structure of their work, teachers have some autonomy in their classrooms. They decide what to do with that autonomy based on how they frame problems and issues. How they frame diversity and inequality results from their own experiences within particular racial, gender, and class locations. Although most of the teachers had been insulated from perspectives and experiences of oppressed racial groups, they had constructed a fairly well-developed conception of the social order based on their experiences as White women and upwardly-mobile members of the working class.

Teachers as White

Teachers bring to their work a worldview that is constructed within unequal racial relationships, but they usually do not recognize it as such. Kathleen Weiler, based on a study of White teachers, observed that,

> [A]s whites they are in a position of dominance and thus do not identify themselves by race, since white privilege is so much a

> defined part of U.S. society that whites are not even conscious of their relationship to power and privilege. In U.S. society, white is the norm; people of color are defined as deviating from that norm and therefore their race becomes an issue.[23]

White Americans and Americans of color grow up in different locations in the racial structure. According to David Wellman,

> Given the racial and class organization of American society, there is only so much people can "see." The positions they occupy in these structures limit the range of their thinking. The situation places barriers on their imaginations and restricts the possibilities of their vision.[24]

Most Whites live in racially homogeneous neighborhoods, families, social groups, and churches, and consume media that are dominated by Whites. Most Whites spend little or no extended time on non-White "turf," although they may incorporate a few people of color into their own worlds

The worldviews of Whites tend to support White privilege, but do so in ways that Whites interpret as natural or as fair. Wellman argued that a contradiction Whites face is how to interpret racial inequality in a way that defends White interests in publicly acceptable terms. Generally, sociobiological explanations for inequality are not acceptable today, so Whites construct alternative explanations. They "resolve the contradiction by minimizing racism. They neutralize it."[25] Working class Whites particularly have a vested interest in protecting their own privileges by adopting strategies of racial exclusion that appear fair.[26]

Most of the White teachers in this study had fairly little exposure to the life experiences and worldviews of Americans of color. All but one had grown up in White neighborhoods. Eighteen had virtually no life experience with Americans of color outside teaching, and in some cases having participated in formal instruction about racial diversity. They acquired first-hand experience with Americans of color mainly by having children of color in class.

The other eight White teachers had somewhat more substantial life experience with racial diversity, which they had acquired through travel, outside interests, or involvement in school-related projects. For example, one had served two years in the Peace Corps in Thailand, and had traveled in the Middle East and Europe; another had been an exchange student in Mexico City one summer, living with a wealthy family but witnessing much dire poverty. Travel can expose teachers to other people's perspectives and ways of life, but does not substitute for experience with American racial minority groups. Two White teachers had attended multiracial schools, one had grown up near a Black neighborhood, and one participated in a summer program for students of color that required extensive home visits.

Travel and contact experiences can sometimes help Whites realize how much they do not understand about race relations, and sensitize them to injustices and to perspectives and experiences of other groups. One White teacher described her

first teaching experience in a university town:

> I...taught in the highest minority school I've ever been in, it was 95 percent Black. And to my surprise, that's when my commitment began. I didn't like the fact that the university community didn't know there was a Black school there. And they didn't. And I knew there was something wrong. (3-10-88)

However, such experiences can also help Whites get past the discomfort people feel around other racial groups without opening them to alternative perspectives. A few of the White teachers commented that they were raised "to be open to anybody" and "without any prejudice," yet their discussions revealed a limited understanding of racism.

Over half of the White teachers had taken a course or a workshop in multicultural education. Four had taken a required course as part of their preservice education, three from African American professors. They said the course had raised their awareness; but one commented that the professor had been "really big into Black culture" (11-20-87), and another described the course as a "hostile experience" (3-24-88). Eight had participated in workshops when their school district was desegregated. What seemed to have stuck with them from the workshops were awareness that curriculum materials should include diverse people, some background information about minority groups in the community, and familiarity with multicultural education terminology. One emphasized having learned that,

> I didn't feel that there was the prejudice that I had been led to believe, especially in the elementary teachers. I know I've heard many people say, I don't like it when you say you're colorblind, because you shouldn't be colorblind, but I really believe that elementary teachers feel that kids are kids,...'cause people would say, Well, what's your minority breakdown? And teachers would really have a rough time saying, you know. It was like asking how many of your kids are wearing glasses. And so really, I'm not denying that there's prejudice but I just don't think it's as strong in the school system as people really assume. (12-15-87)

A few other teachers had attended courses or workshops on other topics, such as Southeast Asians. Some found such courses interesting and signed up voluntarily for more. But at the same time, most were uncomfortable with what they perceived as racial anger; they sought similarities among groups and concrete classroom applications they could add to what they already did. Many did not see a need to change what they did radically, and were offended by strong suggestions that they should.

As the staff development program progressed, several White teachers tried to minimize race by negating it altogether. The seven who advocated a colorblind

perspective clearly were trying to negate race. Five tried to show interest in race by criticizing the project's emphasis on some racial groups--African Americans and Latinos--to the exclusion of others such as American Indians, Arabs, or Japanese. Most White teachers had an unresolved dilemma: how to accept all children regardless of race while explaining their difficulties in school without seeming racist. Some directly used culturalist explanations that blame the "culture of poverty," asserting that race was not the issue. Several tried to ignore culturalist explanations, but unconsciously used them anyway for lack of another explanation for children's classroom behavior and achievement; they first mentioned the racial or socioeconomic composition of their students, then immediately described their problems:

> Well, we have quite a mixture [of students.] We have two Vietnamese children. I have a mulatto. I haven't counted the Blacks. I have a few Spanish, a couple Spanish. And the majority of them do come from a low socioeconomic class. But then I do have a couple of them, about four, from the higher middle class, you know. So it is quite a motley crew of kids, and you've got your middle straight down. There's 27 and they aren't the brightest group that I've had....It's basically an average, low average class. (12-9-88)

For the most part, teachers did not have a convincing alternative framework for thinking about racial inequality.

The teachers of color, on the other hand, held different perspectives. All four had moved north from southern states, where they had grown up in segregated neighborhoods and attended segregated schools. All four had experienced racial discrimination while growing up, and had learned about family experiences with it; they did not have to be convinced that racism exists. For example, one described discrimination his ancestors had experienced in Texas, as well as what he had experienced as a child:

> I remember my third grade teacher telling that we were animals because we didn't know how to eat with a knife and a fork like White children, because...we ate with tortillas....I wanted to take German in high school, and they...would not let me take German, I had to take, as a foreign language I had to take Spanish. Jesus Christ, it doesn't make sense, I could read, write and speak Spanish because we did it at home! (12-11-87)

All four had been angry but learned to keep going:

> There are roadblocks, there are obstacles, there are some people who will throw obstacles in front of you or try to keep you from achieving, OK, you don't have to hate them to get back at them, you just have to do what you need to do,...Go on and achieve what you want to achieve. (1-6-88)

Their parents' education levels varied from not having completed elementary school to having earned a college degree; but their parents had stressed the importance of education, and the teachers of color understood that most families of color value education. They identified with the minority community, and tried to serve it through their work.

The main difference between the White teachers and the teachers of color is that the latter flatly rejected conservative explanations of racial inequality. Further, although they recognized racism as it is expressed through personal attitudes, they did not reduce it to attitudes. Neither did they accept culturalist explanations for racial inequality, although two articulated culturalist explanations for social class inequality. None of the teachers of color offered a radical structuralist interpretation of race relations, but they had insights that would support that perspective, such as a recognition that Whites consistently erect barriers against people of color. Further, they had been involved in social protests during the Civil Rights movement, understood that many of the battles being fought then were still not won, and could see a relationship between multicultural education and social movements for racial equality.

In their investigation of how Americans view inequality, James Kluegel and Eliot Smith found most Americans to believe that opportunity for economic advancement is widely available, and that inequalities are due mainly to unequal efforts and talents. But they also found that,

> The largest and most consistent group disparities in expressed doubt about the workings of the American stratification order are those between blacks and whites....[N]either the disparity by status nor by sex is so large or so consistent across beliefs as that by race....[B]lacks are the group of Americans that come closest to being "class conscious" in the Marxian sense.[27]

White Americans generally are not victims of racial discrimination. Whites do not experience as barriers institutional rules and processes that oppress other groups. Further, Whites usually do not experience the strength and resilience of racial minority communities and families. Spending their lives on White-dominated turf, most Whites develop an experience base that allows them to deny or minimize racism.

Women in a Gendered Profession

Two White women teachers discussed their interest in feminism, which might suggest that a feminist analysis of society would cause them to question the ideology of individualism and equal opportunity. Although the program focused much less on sexual than racial discrimination, since most of the teachers were women it is worth wondering to what extent their experiences with sex discrimination sensitized them to other forms of discrimination. Contrary to what may

seem obvious, the data suggest that women's **unexamined** experience with sexism limits their understanding of social stratification by encouraging them to believe they understand discrimination. I can only speculate on this, since the idea did not occur to me until after I had finished collecting data, but my speculation fits patterns in the data.

In the first session of the program, teachers discussed and rank-ordered topics of interest to them. Very few indicated an interest in studying gender equity, although it was one of several topics suggested to them. Their relative lack of interest seems to have stemmed from a perception that they already understood it. The most lively exchanges among the teachers occurred when men made sex stereotypic statements or accepted instances of obvious sexism, and the women challenged them. For example, in a session on cooperative learning, a technical education teacher mentioned having only one girl in class. Two women immediately asked what he would do next year to change that. He replied, "I have no idea," and went on to say that he uses four different rooms, so students can hide and do things other than work. He was teased heartily, but some women grumbled about sexism in the distribution of students to vocational courses.

An Attitude Assessment that was administered at the beginning and end of the first year provides some insight into this.[28] It asked teachers to respond on a Likert-type scale to 100 items, which I analyzed by categorizing items by race, language, social class, and gender, then computing mean scores (1=low, 5=high) for each category for pre- and post-assessments. Since the interview data proved much richer than data from this assessment, I did not test the scores for statistical significance. However, I was struck by the high mean scores for items about gender. On the pre-assessment, average scores for items on race, language, and social class were 3.54, 3.32, and 3.70 respectively; on the post-assessment they rose to 4.05, 3.83, and 3.96 respectively. The average score for items on gender on the pre-assessment was 4.44, and on the post-assessment, 4.49. These scores suggest that the teachers entered the project already sensitized to gender to a much greater degree than to issues of race, language, and social class.

But the women's understanding of sex discrimination was probably a liberal understanding, locating sexism mainly in biased attitudes of individuals who limit the opportunities of other individuals by treating them stereotypically. A speaker on gender equity reinforced this view as she discussed how patterns in teacher-student interaction encourage boys and discourage girls. The main solution to sexism from a liberal perspective is to try to eliminate sex stereotyping and sexist practices in social institutions, so that all may strive for their dreams as individuals, without regard to sex. From radical structuralist perspectives, liberalism leaves several problems unexamined and contains some contradictions. For example, by stressing the value of careers men of wealth have dominated, liberal feminism tacitly accepts disdain for manual labor and work involving care of the body. Liberal feminism does not offer a critique of the economic structure or the

relationship between the economy and the state, which leads to naive assumptions about the neutrality of the state and blind to the role of capitalism in women's oppression.[29] From a radical structuralist perspective, reform liberal solutions to discrimination would end neither sexism, racism, nor class oppression.

However, the very having of a theory of sexism can suggest to its holders that they do indeed understand one form of discrimination, and need only learn how that theory applies to other forms. Thus, to the extent that women are consciously aware of sex stereotypes that other people articulate and that have limited their own choices, they feel they understand sex discrimination and do not need to analyze it further. Transferring their understanding of sexism to racism would lead them to focus mainly on stereotyping, and on persevering in spite of the hurt other people's stereotypes may cause a person. In this way, women's unexamined experiences with sexism in the context of discourse rooted in liberalism strengthens their own adherence to liberalism as a generalized perspective for understanding social inequality, and gives them a framework for thinking about how discrimination works.

The lives of the women teachers, however, had been structured by gender in ways they took for granted. Historically, teaching has been one of the few socially acceptable routes many women have had into public life and paid work. Madeline Grumet argues that women enter teaching in an effort to move out of the domestic sphere and develop their own potentials and identities as individuals:

> Bonded, interminably, it would seem to her mother and then to her child, the woman who survives the demands of these relationships to work in the world as a curriculum theorist, school administrator, or teacher is often engaged in the project of her own belated individuation and expression.[30]

As teachers, women experience the contradiction between being controlled by a male bureaucracy that has hired them to bring children under control, while they themselves are seeking growth, achievement, and productivity.

All of the women in this study were married and most had children of their own. Fifteen were asked about their mothers' work. The mothers of six had been full-time homemakers (one had taught school before she was married, then quit), the mothers of seven had been homemakers and had also held clerical jobs, and the mothers of two had been farmers. Becoming teachers, all of them had taken on full-time work in the public sphere, which their mothers had not done. In a sense, they had rejected gendered limitations on their lives that their mothers had accepted.

However, the women teachers with children all described a pattern of balancing and usually deferring their careers to the demands of childbearing and mothering, and in this sense their lives had reproduced traditional gendered patterns. Some were consciously aware that they had initially chosen a different career. For example,

> My dad was a pharmacist,...and my mother had been a teacher,

> but she taught for maybe three years and then they were married and it was not acceptable for a pharmacist's wife to work, so she was at home....I really wanted to go into pharmacy, but my mother told me that I should leave that for my brother, that it would be a good idea for me to go into nursing and teaching. Being an obedient child, I did. My brother tried to go to school and he did not like anything that had to do with pharmacy, not the math or chemistry that I enjoyed, and so he never did go into pharmacy. (12-1-87)

Many described career patterns that were checkered by moves due to husbands' work, and stops and starts due to childbirth. The following story was typical:

> I taught kindergarten, went back to school, worked in a child development lab while I was in semi-graduate school. My husband...[was] doing some graduate work, but then I taught so he could finish. That's why I didn't finish my program ....I taught there three years and that was the extent of my teaching at that time because I started a family and chose to be at home for 12 years. And just a fluke, I turned in a sub application the day before Thanksgiving, and on the following Monday I had a call saying, We have a kindergarten opening quite unexpected. Your sub application is here, would you like to apply for a job. (12-17-87)

But at the same time, most of the teachers showed an active interest in continuing to learn, grow, and create, within the bounds of their gendered lives.

For example, one teacher developed an interest in Indian art that she pursued with determination:

> I got very interested in Indian art....My poor ex-husband had to crawl out of and into every settlement that the Indians inhabited, whatever the height of Indians had ever been, and he had to go hiking in there because Shari was interested in it. And this last summer, my husband and I were in Arizona, because I'm very interested in this group of Indians. (1-7-88)

But, like most of the women teachers, her teaching career was interrupted periodically by family demands. Even the fact that she was a teacher rather than another professional was due mainly to following her husband and taking what job she could get in the town in which his job was located.

The teachers seemed to accept their gendered family responsibilities and career choice. Many of them were very bright and capable, and within a context that was shaped and limited by their gender, they had sought opportunities for growth and achievement. As Weiler discussed, we see in the career choices and patterns of women teachers "a logic of existing social structures and ideology" that subordinates women's lives to men's careers.[31] A critical examination of their own

lives could form the basis for a radical structural analysis of gender oppression, but this becomes personally very threatening.

Mobility Through the Class Structure

Liberalism values individualism and hard work; the image of pulling oneself up by one's own bootstraps is taught to American citizens from their early years. Patricia Ashton and Rodman Webb noted that,

> The life experiences of most teachers demonstrate their allegiance to the ethnic of vertical mobility, self-improvement, hard work, deferred gratification, self-discipline, and personal achievement. These individualistic values rest on the assumption that the social system...works well, is essentially fair, and moves society slowly but inevitably toward progress.[32]

Several teachers described life experiences that had taught them that one can work one's way up the class structure through persistence and hard work. Twenty-three discussed their parents' occupations. Four of their fathers had held jobs that normally require college education: pharmacist, engineer, manager of a company, and minister, and two fathers had owned small businesses. The fathers of the other 17 had worked as laborers of various sorts, such as factory worker, railroad laborer, welder, farmer, and fire fighter. Most of the teachers had raised their own social class standing by earning college degrees. Further, at least 12 had completed a Master's degree when the study began, and three more were in the process of doing so. Their volunteering to participate in this project was part of this broader pattern of bettering themselves through education.

Most who were White believed that anyone else who worked and struggled could also achieve success. For example, one had grown up in a poor family in Chicago. He had joined the Navy at age 17 "for a place to sleep and a place to eat" (1-25-89). Of nine siblings, he was the only one to work his way out of poverty; he was driven by "the inner feeling of wanting to be successful" (1-25-89). He did not know why so many other people do not have that same drive; it had worked for him so presumably it could work for other people.

Several teachers talked about their own European ethnic backgrounds (or that of their spouse), and their grandparents' and parents' work ethic. For example, a daughter of Italian immigrants commented:

> One of my pet peeves, that I know if you want to work, you can work....I know what my father did when he was in need,...and we didn't have the free lunches and we didn't have the clothes that other kids wore. (12-15-87)

She went on to describe her father working two jobs, and the family pitching in to do agricultural work; as a result, without government help, she had been able to attend college and establish a fairly comfortable life. Opportunity is there, if people

will only work.

Many Americans regard their own social standing as higher than that of their parents. While most social mobility has been due to an expansion of middle class jobs and widespread improvement of the living standard of Americans in general, people tend to attribute their own improved status to their own individual efforts. As Kluegel and Smith point out,

> while the most common pattern is stability of class position from one generation to the next, upward mobility has also been common and outweighs downward mobility by roughly two to one....Even those who have not been mobile have benefitted, on the whole, from the aggregate improvement in living standards that has taken place since World War II.[33]

Attributing their own family's improved life to individual effort, many people then blame those whose lot has not improved greatly.

None of the teachers who had been born into the working class identified with it or discussed strategies to raise the class as a whole. One's social class of origin, unlike one's race or gender (usually), can be left behind. The teachers who did so successfully saw in their own example the best strategy for confronting social class inequality: working one's way up into another social class. By extension, group membership should not matter, at least in considering life chances. How group membership may affect individual mobility is a subject of debate between liberals and conservatives, but both agree that individual mobility is desirable. Radical structuralists, on the other hand, focus more on group relations, and ask not how to leave behind one's group of origin, but how to strengthen the position of the group as a whole.

Conclusion

Anthony Giddens advanced his analysis of social theory on the premise that, "every social actor knows a great deal about the conditions of reproduction of the society of which he or she is a member."[34] Regardless of how little experience with racial or cultural diversity teachers have had, they enter the classroom with a considerably rich body of knowledge about social stratification, social mobility, and human differences based on their life experience. The analogies the White teachers in this study drew between racism and what they knew about sexism, class mobility, and the White ethnic experience tended to minimize or neutralize racism and multicultural education's implications for action. However, from the teachers' perspectives, they were accounting for racial discrimination, not ignoring it. The teachers participated in as many as 14 all-day sessions of multicultural education. Classroom observations and interviews suggested that they took from the staff development sessions information and teaching strategies to add into their thinking and their work, but that few (if any) substantively restructured their perspective

about racial inequality or classroom teaching.

Of the 26 teachers in this study who discussed the relationship between their goals for teaching and multicultural education, seven saw it as irrelevant, basing their arguments on a conservative understanding of society: that all Americans have fairly equal opportunity to achieve upward mobility, and those who do not progress well are hindered mainly by their own efforts or deficient home backgrounds. Two more who were concerned with struggles of out-groups also articulated mostly conservative perspectives. They probably rejected the sociobiological explanation for racial inequality, and in so doing regarded themselves as relatively progressive. All nine were White, but their sex and social class backgrounds were diverse. The women acknowledged their own experiences with sex stereotyping, one doing so at some length, but saw this as inescapable and too easily used as an excuse for not trying. Those who had grown up in socioeconomically poor homes had pulled themselves up, and as a result believed anyone else could do the same. They maintained that life is not easy and advancement requires work and at times a tough skin, but in general opportunity is open to everyone.

The remaining 17 teachers interpreted multicultural education broadly within a liberal understanding of society. Ten--all women--focused on personal and interpersonal connection. The six who defined multicultural education as human relations showed interest in interpersonal relations more than in how social mobility works, and willingly addressed the social and personal ambiance within their classrooms. Four of the eight teachers who focused on the struggles of out-groups were also interested mainly in nourishing students' self-esteem and interpersonal relationships. When asked about social processes outside the classroom, they acknowledged discrimination, and at times showed anger about unfairnesses. But they were concerned more with helping children cope with the world than change it. Their interpretation of multicultural education was feminine in their emphasis on connection, community, and feeling.[35] It was not yet politicized, however; like the feminist teachers Kathleen Weiler studied, they valued "the creation of a classroom where 'it's okay to be human' in terms of relationships," but unlike them, had not "developed a commitment to raising issues and questioning accepted social values and ideology."[36]

The rest, whom I have classified broadly within liberalism, brought some degree of political criticism to their understanding of multicultural education. The teachers of color brought their awareness of institutional racism; two special education teachers brought awareness of how schools institutionalize failure. The other White teachers brought life experiences they began to connect with political criticism for reasons the data do not suggest.

But for the most part, the teachers' perspectives took as given the social context of the individual, and asked how to prepare the individual to live within that context. Most further assumed that, with some variations, society's rules apply similarly to everyone; the rules may not always be fair but they are acceptable, and

processes for setting them are fair.

It is important to note that the teachers in this study were a self-selected group. They volunteered to participate because they believed multicultural education might be useful to them. The proportions advocating conservative and liberal perspectives (as well as radical structuralist glimmerings) are probably rather different from those of the teaching profession at large, where it is likely that a much higher proportion subscribe to conservatism.

Teacher educators who work with teachers in multicultural education need to confront teachers' political perspectives, doing so in a way that accounts for, rather than dismisses, the experiential basis of those perspectives. For example, I have required preservice students to read Lois Stalvey's The *Education of a WASP*, which traces a White middle class woman as she relearns how race in America works for African Americans.[37] Such a book can help White teachers re-think their beliefs about race while acknowledging both the validity and limitations of their own life experience. Other teacher educators begin with teachers' experiences as women, working to politicize their interpretation of gender. This does not lead automatically to a politicized understanding of race and social class, but it can provide a basis for doing so by reconceptualizing stereotyping and unfairness as collective and structural rather than just individual and attitudinal phenomena.

Notes

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2. See, for example, Dan C. Lortie, *Schoolteacher*, (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975); and Patricia T. Ashton & Rodman B. Webb, *Making a Difference. Teachers' Sense of Efficacy and Student Achievement*, (New York: Longman, 1986).

3. See, for example, Madeline R. Grumet, *Bitter Milk*, (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988); Jo Anne Pagano, *Exiles and Communities*, (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1990).

4. See, for example, Michael W. Apple, "Gendered Teaching, Gendered Labor," in *Critical Studies in Teacher Education*, edited by Thomas S. Popkewitz (Basingstoke, England: Falmer Press, 1987), pp. 57-84.

5. See, for example, Jacqueline J. Irvine, "An Analysis of the Problem of Disappearing Black Educators," *Elementary School Journal* 88, (1988), pp. 503-513; A. W. Simpson & Marilyn T. Erickson, "Teachers' Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Patterns as a Function of Teacher Race, Student Gender, and Student Race," *American Educational Research Journal* 20 (1983), pp. 183-198.

6. Kenneth R. Hoover, *Ideology and Political Life*, (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Pub. Co, 1987), p. 33.

7. Hoover, *Ideology and Political Life*, p. 34.

8. Cornell West, "Race and Social Theory: Towards a Genealogical Materialist Analysis," in *The Year Left 2: An American Socialist Yearbook*, edited by M. Davis, M. Marable, F. Pfeil, & M. Sprinker (London, England: Verso, 1987), p. 76.
9. See Hoover, *Ideology and Political Life*, for a discussion of the difference between classical and reform liberalism.
10. Alison M. Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*, (Totowa, NJ: Rowan & Allanheld, 1983), pp. 175-6.
11. Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*, p. 208.
12. Martin Carnoy, "Education, State, and Culture in American Society," in *Critical Pedagogy, the State, and Cultural Struggle*, edited by Henry A. Giroux & Peter McLaren (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1989), pp. 6-7.
13. Barry Troyna & Jenny Williams, *Racism, Education and the State*, (Beckenham, England: Croom Helm, 1986), p. 46.
14. See Cameron McCarthy, "Rethinking Liberal and Radical Perspectives on Racial Inequality in Schooling: Making the Case for Nonsynchrony," *Harvard Educational Review* 58, (1988), pp. 265-279; and Michael Olneck, "The Recurring Dream: Symbolism and Ideology in Intercultural and Multicultural Education," *American Journal of Education* 98 (1990), pp. 147-174.
15. I have developed these arguments in more detail elsewhere. See Christine E. Sleeter, "Multicultural Education as a Form of Resistance to Oppression," *Journal of Education* 171 (1989), pp. 51-71.
16. See Geneva Gay, "Multiethnic Education : Historical Developments and Future Prospects," *Phi Delta Kappan* 64, (1983), pp. 560-563.
17. The entire study is reported in Christine E. Sleeter, *Keepers of the American Dream* (London, England: The Falmer Press, 1992).
18. See Christine E. Sleeter & Carl A. Grant, "Race, Class, Gender, and Disability in Current Textbooks," in *The Politics of the Textbook*, edited by Michael W. Apple & Linda K. Christian-Smith. (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 78-110.
19. All names are fictitious; dates following quotations refer to the dates of interviews.
20. West, "Race and Social Theory."
21. Martyn Denscombe, "The Work Context of Teaching: An Analytic Framework for the Study of Teachers in Classrooms," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 1, (1980), pp. 279-292; see also Kathleen Densmore, "Professionalism, Proletarianization and Teacher Work," in *Critical Studies in Teacher Education*, edited by Thomas S. Popkewitz, (Basingstoke, England: The Falmer Press, 1987), pp. 130-161; and Andrew Gitlin, "School Structure and Teachers' Work," in *Ideology and Practice in Schooling*, edited by Michael W. Apple & Lois Weis (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1983), pp. 192-212.
22. Sleeter, *Keepers of the American Dream*, Chapter 7.
23. Kathleen Weiler, *Women Teaching for a Change*, (South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey, 1988), pp. 75-76.
24. David T. Wellman, *Portraits of White Racism*, (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 235.
25. Wellman, *Portraits of White Racism*, p. 219.
26. Bernard R. Boxill, "IS Civil Rights Legislation Irrelevant to Black Progress?" in *Race: Twentieth Century Dilemmas, Twentieth Century Prognosis*, edited by Winston A. Van Horne, (Milwaukee, WI: The University of Wisconsin System Institute on Race

and Ethnicity), pp. 12-48.

27. James R. Kluegel & Eliot R. Smith, *Beliefs about Inequality: Americans' Views of What is and What Ought to Be*, (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1986), p. 289.
28. See Carl A. Grant & Christine E. Sleeter, *After the School Bell Rings*, (Basingstoke, England: The Falmer Press, 1986), p. 270.
29. Limitations to liberal feminism are discussed in detail in Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*, pp. 186-203.
30. Grumet, *Bitter Milk*, p. 28.
31. Weiler, *Women Teaching for a Change*, p. 89.
32. Ashton & Webb, *Making a Difference*, pp. 29-30.
33. Kluegel & Smith, *Beliefs about Inequality*, p. 24.
34. Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979), p. 5.
35. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980).
36. Weiler, *Women Teaching for a Change*, pp. 113-114.
37. Lois Marks Stalvey, *The Education of a WASP*, (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

Afrocèntrisms: Capitalist, Democratic, and Liberationist Portraits

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Afrocentrism and Afrocentric curriculum are increasingly being discussed in the educational press. Since November 1990, numerous articles have appeared in *Education Week* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* as well as *The Educational Excellence Network News and Views*. This work has included even handed pro/con articles as well as attacks on Afrocentrism and Afrocentric curriculum. Whether fair or heavy handed, the articles have tended to view the issue from the perspective of horror stories. The three major criticisms of Afrocentrism have been that it is: 1) historical distortion; 2) divisive curriculum; or 3) race-driven curriculum. At their worst, the critics have portrayed Afrocentrists as people who believe that all that is African and African-American is good and that all that is European-American and/or white is bad. Afrocentrists are viewed as people who want to take over the school curriculum and make Afrocentrism

the official American curriculum.[1] This essay takes exception to the above analysis. Our purpose is to present examples of Afrocentrism whose goal is African and African American "inclusion" and "infusion" in the school curriculum. Finally, it will become evident why the title of this essay is "Afrocentrisms." Although the criticisms of Afrocentrism are monolithic, the Afrocentrist movement is diverse. Conservatives, liberals, and radicals are all included, as are capitalists, socialists, and communists. Afrocentrism is a broad movement that promotes the inclusion of African and African-American history and culture in the school curriculum. Ultimately, Afrocentrism defies singular definition.

The Afrocentric movement has been shaped by three events—the meetings of The Conference for the Infusion of African and African-American Content in the High School Curriculum which was held in Atlanta in 1989 and 1990; the publication of the *African-American Baseline Essays* by the Portland Public Schools in 1989; and, finally, the publication of the New York State Minority Task Force's *A Curriculum of Inclusion* in 1989.[2] Each of these events provide us with broad conceptions and theories of Afrocentrism and Afrocentric curriculum. This essay will examine a variety of Afrocentrisms. The Afrocentric portraits presented connect African and African-American history and culture to the continuing fight against racism in American society and American education. Included will be analysis of three strains of Afrocentrism: 1) Capitalist Afrocentrism; 2) Democratic Afrocentrism; and 3) Liberationist Afrocentrism.

The most often cited conceptualization of Afrocentrism appears in Molefi Kete Asante's book, *The Afrocentric Idea*.[3] Asante, chairman of African-American studies at Temple University, begins by distinguishing African and African-American history and culture from European and European-American history and culture. The former stresses humanism and communalism, while the latter is materialistic. Asante asserts that the beliefs and behaviors of African-Americans need to be portrayed and understood within the context of African and African-American history and culture. He cites African and African-American scholars as well as white scholars like Martin Bernal and Michael Bradley to explore Afrocentrism.[4] The nobility of African roots is presented as the foundation for the education of African-Americans today. The work of three Afrocentrist educators--Janice Hale-Benson, Ramona Edelin, and Booker Peek--represent the three Afrocentrist views cited above (capitalist, democratic, and liberationist). There are other representations of Afrocentrism that will be cited throughout this essay, but we will focus on the work of Hale-Benson, Edelin, and Peek, because each views Afrocentrism as the connecting of African and African-American history and culture to the continuing struggle against racism and for civil rights.

Capitalist Afrocentrism

There are Afrocentrists that would view Afrocentrism and Capitalism as

contradictory views of the world. There are also Africans and African-Americans, both past and present, whose beliefs and behaviors support both capitalism and African history and culture. A colleague of mine, who is an African-American early childhood education professor, has referred to Hale-Benson's work as "speaking out of both sides of her mouth." I might add that the analysis was not judgmental. It might be that Afrocentrism and Capitalism are strange bedfellows. It also might be that the problems and issues that are connected to the relationship of education, work, and race can be informed by this partnership. The educational issues, and subsequently occupational issues, that Hale-Benson's program, *Visions for Children*, attempts to address are a reaction to the racism and inequality that still exist in American society. Hale-Benson reviews *Visions for Children* in Kofi Lomotey's collection, *Going to School: The African-American Experience*, which is a book of diverse essays that are "geared toward the formulation and implementation of practices and policies designed to improve the academic achievement of African-American students."[5]

Capitalistic Afrocentrism addresses the racial disparity that exists in American education and society at the present time. James Comer, an African-American professor of psychology at Yale, introduces the need for an educational approach that acknowledges and acts on "the socioeconomically disadvantaged condition of Black children and the failure of educational institutions to respond appropriately and humanistically to the needs created by these conditions."[6] Statistically, these conditions include: 1) 45 percent drop out rate among urban blacks; 2) 72 percent drop out rate among urban black males; 3) 3 times greater chance for a black child to be poor; 4) median income for black families at 57.1 percent of white families; 5) 4 times greater chance for black mothers to die in childbirth; 6) 15.2 percent unemployment for blacks/6 percent for whites.[7]

Hale-Benson's work addresses the racial disparity with a program that stresses the need for the bicultural education of African-American children. Biculturalism is introduced within the context of W. E. B. Dubois' early work on "the talented tenth," where he explained that blacks lived in two worlds—the world of African heritage and culture and the world of white culture.[8] Both demanded acknowledgement, and although Dubois later reneged on his theory, Hale-Benson builds *Visions for Children* on the same premise. Hale-Benson's program combines a curriculum of African-American culture and heritage with a curriculum of information and skills that promotes "upward mobility, career achievement, and financial independence in the American mainstream."[9] African and African-American studies are integrated in a curriculum that stresses language/communication skills, cognitive skills, and mathematical skills, as well as self-concept and positive attitudes towards learning and school. African and African-American history and culture are taught, as is standard English. African and African-American oral tradition, art, and music are an ongoing part of the curriculum, as is the study of African diaspora communities and holidays like the *Emancipation*

Proclamation, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Juneteenth, Malcolm X's Birthday, Kwanzaa, and the *14th Amendment* to the *Constitution*. Hale-Benson cites Hakim Rashid for theoretical support of her bicultural curriculum beginning at the pre-school level:

> To achieve equal educational outcomes for Black children, it will be necessary to design an educational system that complements rather than opposes Black culture. The pre-school experience must therefore provide a dynamic blend of African-American culture and that culture which is reflected in the Euro-American educational setting. The African-American child who only sees the Euro-American cultural tradition manifested in the preschool environment can only conclude that the absence of visual representation of his culture connotes his essential worthlessness.[10]

Visions for Children includes training for teachers so that they are sensitive to building self-concept and a positive school attitude. The emphasis, however, appears to be on the skills needed for upward mobility set within the context of self-concept and Afrocentrism. Hale-Benson explains that the early nurturing of reading and writing skills are directly connected to college admission tests and she is emphatic about standard English: "One fact is clear: speaking standard English is a skill needed by Black children for upward mobility."[11]

Visions for Children is a program that nurtures Hale-Benson's biculturalism. African and African-American history and culture provide roots and combine with standard educational excellence for a program that celebrates ethnicity as well as educational and occupational upward mobility. Hale-Benson's vision is what Cameron McCarthy disparagingly refers to as a multicultural emancipatory program.[12] He cites Bullivant and Rushton as proponents of programs that foster ethnic history and culture to help minority students advance educationally and occupationally.[13] McCarthy refers to Crichlow and Troyna and Williams to critique multicultural emancipatory theory. He believes that it is naive to the existing reality of class disparity and racism that still prevails in American society.[14] Needless to say, Hale-Benson is well aware of the present reality. If we extend McCarthy's critique, however, might it be that the expected payoffs of *Visions for Children* are antithetical to the realities of American education and society?

Democratic Afrocentrism

Two of the essays in the *African-American Baseline Essays*, Michael Harris on art and Joyce Braden Harris on language arts, address the democratic heritage of African and African-American culture. The collective nature of African art is stressed, as are present examples of democratic African-American art coopera-

tives where much of the work is political in nature with the message of racial equality.[15] Harris explores Democratic Afrocentrism through the African oral tradition—a tradition that is celebrated by African-Americans:

> Black speech has a collective orientation based on African communal values. Speakers who are able to use the rhythm of the ancestors to verbalize the Black condition become folk heroes to African-Americans.[16]

Harris cites Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech and Jesse Jackson's speech at the democratic convention as examples. The most thoughtful exploration of Democratic Afrocentrism was Edelin's presentation at the Atlanta conference.[17] Edelin's speech, "Curriculum and Cultural Identity," is a proposal for an Afrocentric curriculum that is twofold: 1) An Afrocentric curriculum that reasserts the African-American democratic cultural integrity of the past; and 2) African-American participation and involvement in educational policy and decision making.

Edelin is informed by W. E. B. Dubois' *The Gift of Black Folk: Negroes in the Making of America* on the "unyielding democratic spirit" of African-Americans.[18] She calls for an African-American reassertion of this spirit:

> The African American group lacks cultural integrity, and has started a process of self-correction and consensus-building for the specific purpose of rectifying this serious problem. In many important respects, our forbearers who were slaves, sharecroppers, and servants enjoyed a higher degree of cultural integrity than we do today. They founded schools, businesses, and mutual aid societies together; their values and their devotion to duty were rock steady; they made time to help and care for one another and to enforce and pass on their beliefs, intentions ways of doing things, traditions and group vision. They resisted systemic assaults on their dignity and humanity; and they perpetuated and advanced our group.[19]

Edelin is not romanticizing the past, but rather calling for group action in the present. Her vision corresponds well with Richard Long, whose Atlanta presentation addressed the need for intense African-American cultural education for all African-Americans under 30 years old.[20] For Edelin, it is Democratic Afrocentric education that is needed by young African-Americans. Her call for participation and involvement in educational policy is also twofold. It is a proposal to address the societal problems that are affecting young African-Americans, while at the same time demanding the end of theories like self-fulfilling prophecy and cultural deprivation that corrupt the possibilities of educational excellence for African-American children. Edelin emphasizes that it must be the African-American democratic heritage that eliminates teen-age pregnancy and drugs from the lives of African-American youth. It is also the African-American heritage that will give substance to the infusion of Afrocentric school curriculum.

Edelin's Democratic Afrocentrism is important because it is a reconceptualization of the character as well as the content of school curriculum. Because it is democratic rather than capitalistic, and because it is informed by the communal and collective nature of the African and African-American heritage, Edelin's Afrocentrism does not settle for a "piece of the American pie"[21] (as if one is offered). She explains emphatically, "No! As we have said many times, in many contexts, once we get into the mainstream, the mainstream will change."[22] The change is again informed by Dubois, this time his book, *Black Reconstruction*.[23] It is a change that asks for "absolute equality," and thus "the advance of all humanity."[24]

Liberationist Afrocentrism

The Marxist position on race and schooling in American society is presented in Marvin Berlowitz's book, *Racism and the Denial of Human Rights: Beyond Ethnicity*. We are not surprised when Berlowitz places white racism in America within the context of class analysis as an issue that "must be understood in the proper perspective as forms of ideological mystification designed to facilitate exploitation and weaken the collective power of the labouring classes."[25] Afrocentrist educators do not deny the reality of class disparity in American society, but their vision of liberation begins with white racism rather than class theory. This is evident in the work of Peek, an Oberlin College educator.[26] Peek, who eschews scholarly writing, tutors children and adults in northern Ohio (he directs his college students in the same work) with the purpose of African-American liberation. His analysis of racism and disparate educational and economic achievement begins with the premise that "the discrepancy is attributable to the fact there is a racism that has been keeping Blacks in inferior positions, and making Blacks themselves feel inferior."[27] Both aspects of Peek's premise are important for an analysis of Liberationist Afrocentrism. Although Paulo Freire is not cited by Peek, it is a *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* viewpoint that informs Peek's work.[28]

Liberationist Afrocentrism is divided by Peek into two formats—political education and skills education. Political education encompasses all of our lives; it just depends on whether it is a political education that we choose or one that is chosen by others. Political education includes culture, history, desire, and aspirations:

> For Black Americans it has to be a total quest for liberation not only for ourselves but for all oppressed people through-out the world—particularly those in Africa. That's political education. So, I see a need for involving children with cultural education. That comes under political education and is the responsibility of parents and of family and anyone else who cares about the political development of the child. There is no way to eliminate

> that possibility; you will either be politically educated to represent and respond to your own needs and desires or you will be responding to the needs and desires of other people.[29]

Peek's definition of political education makes for a compelling argument for the infusion and inclusion of Afrocentric education in the school curriculum. It is an extension of Edelin's argument that we presented above, but it takes us further by directly connecting political education and skills education. While skills education is neutral, Peek compares skills and tools and concludes that such preparation is essential for African-American liberation. Afrocentricity is part of liberation, but it is meaningless without skills education. African and African-American history and culture are important, but they are impotent if they do not connect to the present African-American reality. Conversely, if they do connect to the present, the example being the political education that Peek believes essential, then it is Afrocentrism that will initiate the demand of skills education by African-Americans.

Peek discusses the marriage of political and skills education within the context of the two issues introduced above; white racism in American society and the acceptance of inferiority by African-Americans. Peek addresses the work of Jensen and Shockley, tracking, self-fulfilling prophecy, and the recent resurgence of overt racism in the United States. He begins with a general indictment:

> I would say that the state of Black education is directly attributable to the social conditions in the society, starting with our enslavement—physical enslavement--and continuing up to now with our psychological enslavement where we don't quite have the same kinds of standards for our liberation or define it as do most other people; that's total and absolutely unquestionable liberation. In that sense, I would say the totality of Black education is affected by the social system.[30]

Jensen and Shockley's work is analyzed in two different ways. Initially, Peek explains that neither their arguments or evidence is compelling; especially within a society/educational system that still discriminates because of color. Peek asserts that Jensen and Shockley are problematic because their views are still accepted, albeit often quietly, by American educators. This is evident in his further discussion of Black education and what educators refer to as the self-fulfilling prophecy:

> Now, once that philosophy remains in place, then children are not taught properly. They are not taught by teachers who believe in them so they don't learn to read, and they don't learn to write because in school reading and writing and thinking critically are the tools that are offered... Students are turned off. It's boring... Reading and writing and thinking are activities that are extremely boring if you can't do them—if you don't have people

who believe that you can do them and that you must do them.[31]

Peek connects tracking to the above discussion. Modern day tracking is self tracking. Black students do not choose chemistry, physics, or honor courses because they have never been provided with the skills education that is a prerequisite.

The most powerful part of the white racism argument is the reference to its resurgence. Peek discusses drop-out rates, high school graduation rates, and diminishing enrollments of African-Americans at the university level. Peek views it as an issue of white power, an attempt to return to a 1950s image of white supremacy by keeping the number of Black professionals very low. The argument, of course, becomes more potent with an acknowledgement of growing overt white racism on college campuses. For Peek, the greatest tragedy is that "the evils that whites perpetuated initially have carried over into us today to the extent that we are participating in the conspiracy."[32]

The heart of Liberationist Afrocentrism is the work of African-Americans in promoting political education, history, and culture, and demanding skills education:

> we must start seeing it as abnormal that we do not perform in reading, writing, and arithmetic as well as the dominant culture. We must see that as abnormal. We have to see that a change must be undertaken regardless of the cost or time. If we are unable to do that, we will remain in an inferior position. But if we are able to alter our political education, what would follow would be a strong desire to acquire skills education which is offered in school systems and in homes, and we would not accept the low-level performance which is typical for the majority of Black Americans. That would change everything.[33]

Peek places the burden on African-American educators, teachers, and professors, as well as African-American professionals. He asks them to be outraged by both white racism and African-American inferiority in skills education. For Peek, it is time for African-Americans to demand equality and quality education. Peek's tutoring is a personal example—social class and/or race does not determine ability or learning capacity. Peek boldly asserts that skills education is an easy proposition:

> what I am saying is whether one is reared in an upper- middle-class home or not, once the parents understand and the school systems understand that education can be supplemented by nearly 3,000 or 4,000 additional words, that child in that environment will suddenly have what would be considered an upper-middle-class education minus the social things that would go with that particular education.[34]

Peek continues by stressing the institutional responsibility of schools and teachers

for providing uneducated parents with this knowledge and their children with a quality skills education. The responsibility of African-American educators and professionals is repeated throughout Peek's work. He discusses white racism in terms of white power and acknowledges that quality skills education doesn't reach the high percentage of white Americans. It is right out of C. Wright Mills' work, both *White Collar* and *The Power Elite*.[35] More pressing for Peek is the cooptation of middle-class African-Americans. Are individual suburban homes and professional jobs antithetical to both a political and skills education for **all** African-Americans? This issue, of course, is beginning to be addressed extensively. Roger Wilken's work on neoconservative Blacks has been joined by William Julius Wilson's *The Truly Disadvantaged* and Nicholas Lemanns' study of Chicago.[36] Peek acknowledges the reality and then demands its reversal. Liberationist Afrocentrism is a call for quality education—political and skills—for all African-Americans.

Finally, Peek turns Liberationist Afrocentrism into an issue of life and death for all Americans. The education of the few equates with a belief that "might is right." A belief in quality education for all means a belief in the productivity and decency of humanity. The former is genocidal, the latter is life affirming—for African-Americans, for European-Americans, for all Americans.

Conclusion

The purpose of this essay has been to portray three very different examples of Afrocentrism. Each of the portraits, however, shares a common thread. Each asserts the need for the connection of Afrocentrism or African/African-American history and culture to the struggle **against** racism and **for** equality that still exists in the United States of America in 1991. Each of the Afrocentrisms presented promotes a different outcome, or payoff if you like. For Janice Hale-Benson it is an Afrocentrism that will promote the "American Dream" for African-American children. Ramona Edelin's Afrocentrism will provide the African/African-American democratic roots to promote democracy in the United States and throughout the world. Finally, Booker Peek's Afrocentrism promotes educational and occupational excellence for all—African-Americans, European-Americans, and the entire brotherhood of man/woman.

The point that has to be stressed one last time is that this is a story of Afrocentrisms. Each of the above is a form of Afrocentrism, and yet each is very different. Interestingly, none of the three are exclusive. None of the three promotes the exclusion of white people. Rather, each of the three portraits asks for a world of inclusion. It should be added that there are other Afrocentrisms that could have been presented. The three that are portrayed were chosen for their diversity and their educational **possibilities**. **Possibilities** must be stressed. Although I might prefer some combination of Edelin and Peek to Hale-Benson, the truth is that we

have no idea what the results of Afrocentric curriculum—whether it be from these three portraits or others—will produce in the end. Peek's thoughts on skills education, which are reminiscent of Martin Buber and Bernard Mehl, provide an appropriate thought for conclusion.[37]

Peek was speaking of skills education, but I'm going to delete skills: "Education may allow a person to live a life like Hitler or a life like Mother Theresa." Being informed by Buber and Mehl, and now Peek, we know that you can't keep a scorecard. The Afrocentrism that Edelin and Peek offer is an Afrocentrism of possibilities. The outcome cannot be known, without them the outcome cannot be tolerated.

Notes

1. See Alan Wieder, "Afrocentrism and Education: A Critical Review," unpublished manuscript. This essay reviews Asante's work, the Infusion Conference, the Portland *African-American Baseline Essays*, the New York State Curriculum, as well as the criticisms of Afrocentrism. The latter include journalistic essays by Carol Innerst ("Putting Africa on the Map," *Washington Times*, November 13, 1990), Andrew Sullivan ("Racism 101," *The New Republic*, November 26, 1990), Steve Duin ("A Return to Segregationist History," *The Oregonian*, November 11, 1990), John Leo ("A Fringe History of the World," *U. S. News and World Report*, November 12, 1990), and the scholarly work of Diane Ravitch. Innerst's and Sullivan's articles are reviews of the Infusion Conference. The former is critical but even handed while Sullivan's essay portrays the conference as a promotion of African and African-American curriculum at the expense of European and European-American curriculum. Duin's and Leo's essays discuss the Portland *Baseline Essays*. Both articles are mean spirited, cynical hatchet jobs. Ravitch's most important essay, "Multiculturalism: E Pluribus Plures," (*American Scholar*, Summer 1990) is thoughtful and worth consideration, but in final analysis she relegates Afrocentrism to a particularistic undemocratic view of the world. She asks some valid questions, but none of them contradict the Afrocentrists that we will discuss below.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Molefi Kete Asante, *The Afrocentric Idea* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1987).
4. *Ibid.*
5. Kofi Lomotey (editor), *Going to School: The African-American Experience* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1990), p. xiii.
6. James Comer and Norris Haynes, "Helping Black Children Succeed: The Significance of Some Social Factors," in *Going to School*, p. 103.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 104.
8. W. E. B. Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago, IL: McClurg, 1903).
9. Janice Hale-Benson, "Visions for Children: Educating Black Children in the Context of Their Culture," in *Going to School*, p. 212.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 210.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

12. Cameron McCarthy, "Race and Education in the United States: The Multicultural Solution," *Interchange*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Fall 1990), p. 48.
13. *Ibid*
14. *Ibid*, p. 49.
15. See the Portland Public Schools *African-American Baseline Essays*.
16. *Ibid*
17. Ramona Edelin, "Curriculum and Cultural Identity," in *Infusion of African and African-American Content in the School Curriculum: Proceedings of the First National Conference*, (October 1989).
18. *Ibid*, p. 39.
19. *Ibid*, pp. 39-40.
20. Richard Long, "The African Diaspora," in the *Infusion Proceedings*.
21. Edelin, p. 43.
22. *Ibid*
23. *Ibid*, p. 45.
24. *Ibid*
25. McCarthy, p. 49.
26. Lomotey, "An Interview with Booker Peek," in *Going to School*.
27. *Ibid*, p. 21.
28. See Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1986).
29. Lomotey, p. 15.
30. *Ibid*, p. 14.
31. *Ibid*, p. 19.
32. *Ibid*, p. 17.
33. *Ibid*, p. 18.
34. *Ibid*, p. 20.
35. See C. Wright Mills, *White Collar* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), and *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).
36. See Roger Wilkins, "Not by Bootstraps Alone," *Village Voice* (February 4, 1986); William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Nicholas Lemanns, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America* (New York: Knopf, 1991).
37. See Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1970); Bernard Mehl, *Classical Educational Ideas* (Columbus, OH: Merrill Publishers, 1974).

Evaluation Form

1. How many of the articles in this issue did you read?

   All_____ Many_____ Some_____ None _____

2. Which articles did you find particularly interesting, and why?

   _____

   _____

3. What topics, themes or authors would you like to see in future issues?

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Parent Mentorship: Socializing Children to School Culture

By Concha Delgado-Gaitan and Nadeen T. Ruiz

A strong positive relationship between parental involvement and children's scholastic improvement has been well documented in the literature for both mainstream and ethnically different groups (Chavkin, 1990; Colemen, 1987; Comer, 1984; 1986; Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Leler, 1983; McLaughlin & Shields, 1987; Walberg, 1984). This burgeoning literature, replete with empirical research, reviews, and policy recommendations, has not only pointed out the importance of home-school linkages, but it has also helped to bring understanding and order to the several, often differing, models of parental involvement. Perhaps most importantly, it has touched upon the meta-theoretical assumptions underlying the varied approaches. In this paper, the Parental Mentorship Program Model is placed within this field (Delgado-Gaitan, 1986 & 1987).

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Parental Mentorship

The concept of mentorship as discussed in this paper is not an attempt to create new jargon. Essentially, we understand the term to mean an extension of parent involvement as the theoretical construct. That is, parent involvement means many different things, but what we recognize is that much of the parent involvement literature has as its primary focus the relationship between parents and the school. Here we use the concept of mentorship as a way of focusing on the relationship between parents and children. As parents become more knowledgeable in their interaction with schools, often their relationship with their children strengthens. How the relationship between parent and child relative to education ensues is described in order to note how parents actively advocate for their children.

The Carpinteria Parental Mentorship Model (PMM), while sharing essential features of previous models, differs importantly in the way parents, school personnel, and students enact their roles within the education paradigm. Essentially, the model is the product of studies which have carefully examined the socio-organizational patterns of teaching and learning in ethnically different children's homes. PMM recognizes parents as the primary teachers of the "home curriculum," where the vast majority of children have been successful (rather than "delayed" or "at risk") learners (Ruiz, 1989). Furthermore, the PMM views parents as social and cultural brokers in school-related matters, who transmit their knowledge to children so that they may obtain the resources and support needed for academic success. This role of parents as social and cultural brokers is the primary focus of this paper, with the major question being: How do Latino parents perform their role as mentors for their children?. The discussion herein is based on a study of parental mentorship among 18 Hispanic third grade children and their families.

Models of Parental Involvement Programs Revisited

Scholars in this area had distinguished three broad models of parental involvement programs: 1) the Family Impact Model, 2) the School Impact Model, and 3) the Cooperative Systems Model (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990). For a more through review, refer to Cochran (1988); Florin & Dokencki (1985) Keesling & Melaragno (1983) and Leler (1983).

Programs operating under the Family Impact Model encourage families to adopt ways of interacting with their children that are believed to promote academic success. Evaluations of these programs generally show evidence of increased school achievement, albeit with differing degrees of maintenance. However, these intervention programs imply that families are in some way deficient and that the school has the role of teaching parents a corpus of "best family practices." These practices, by and large, imitate the language and learning structures of the school.

Few of these studies have examined the actual discrete home learning environments of the families involved, and therefore lack the insight which comes from participant observation.

Leler (1983), in a broad review of parental involvement programs, asserted that almost one-third of the Family Impact studies showed no difference between subjects and control groups in academic achievement. Even if one were to stipulate that some academic improvement occurs in this approach, there is a lack of understanding of how such programs influence individual families and how family members undergo change. Delgado-Gaitan (1990) points out that this type of study tells us little about parental roles outside the home and how they effect children's academic success.

The School Impact Model describes the inclusion of parents in decision-making (and other) roles within the school infrastructure, but its results are less available for review (Leler, 1983). Delgado-Gaitan's (1990) review of studies of programs within this model found that:

> ...parents were the basic ingredient in a strong academic program of all students and particularly in the case of children and families from the working class. (p.53).

However, she notes that these studies emphasize children's academic gains without revealing how parents changed, how they learned to become more involved, and how this translated into their children's increased success in test scores.

The third model of parent-school programs discussed in the literature is the Cooperative Systems Model. Here participants expect that interaction will be bi-directional, that is, schools will influence homes and communities and parents will impact upon the school. Emphasis is placed on the collaboration, mutual support, and common goal of students' social and academic success. Both families and schools assume accountability for this common goal (See Comer, 1986; Seeley, 1989).

Leler (1983) and Delgado-Gaitan (1990) review studies of programs operating under this model and report their successes. Current articles in journals about this model often use the word "partners" in describing parents' roles (Pyszkowski, 1990). Nevertheless, gaps and problems exist in this model and its policy directives. While the notion of home-school partnerships suggests an equal power base (and, in one case, bi-directionality), we find meager evidence to support the notion that the home influences the school. Seldom is there reference to the "home curriculum" as a source of knowledge; seldom are home teaching and learning styles utilized by the schools. Unfortunately, the "good idea" of parent-home partnerships is given "lip-service," but rarely operationalized as to specifics of parents' roles and areas of knowledge. The details of interactional patterns which are associated with effective parental involvement—parent-teacher, parent-child, teacher-child, parent-system, and child-system—are not clarified or illuminated.

When specific roles for parents are mentioned (Pyszkowski, 1989), they are low-status, non-academic, aide-like tasks such as taking attendance, setting up audio-visual materials, checking homework, and collecting money. Even when a tutoring role is suggested, we suspect that authors of these programs and articles constrain tutoring to the school's curriculum, and the school's ways of talking and knowing. Pyszkowski's (1990) suggestions for parent tutors seem to support our suspicions:

> Classroom assistants can be trained to handle small reading groups. Listening to a small group read or practice word lists by an assistant enables the teacher to devote more time to individualized activities with other students. (p. 290).

Comments such as these imply that the **real** teaching is that done by the teacher. In the context of a "partnership model," there is no equity or balance to the partnership.

Programs operating under all three models—the Family Impact Model, the School Impact Model, and the Cooperative Systems Model—have given evidence of some success. It is tempting to leave these reports with the sense that anything in the way of home-school interventions will work to a certain extent. However, the authors' recent research on parent-child interaction suggests that issues in parental involvement are complex. A group of school-home studies have examined this complexity and have gone further towards identifying parent patterns of involvement and explaining factors which influence participation. These studies have focused on working class families.

Working-Class Parents and Their School Involvement

Lareau (1989), in a careful study of home-school relationships among professional and working-class parents, identified a mediating aspect of parent-school partnerships: social class. Lareau examined parental participation in two schools, one which primarily served a working-class community, the other a professional-class community. Differences appeared in school participation patterns of the two groups of parents. Unlike professional-class parents, working-class parents initiated less contact with teachers, raised more nonacademic issues with teachers, were more awkward and strained in their contacts, were less familiar with the school curriculum, and knew less about the specific academic problems of their children. Lareau (1989) insightfully highlighted the social factors which structured the two groups' participation, e. g. educational background, access to material resources, and social networks. For example, adequate childcare services and housekeepers allowed professional-class parents to regularly attend school functions and otherwise interact with the school. Furthermore, their social networks were strongly tied by contacts with other parents at formally-organized children's activities, such as ballet, gymnastics, and soccer. These were excellent times to share information about their children's schooling. In contrast, working-

class parents' social networks were dominated by family members, which did not provide information exchange about the schools.

Lareau holds that there is nothing intrinsically "better" about the professional parents' home and school interactional patterns, but rather that they simply fit well with the schools' current definition of the proper family-school relationship. In other words, these parents exhibited behaviors which were congruent with the school's expectations and culture.

Since teachers make judgments regarding parents' educational values based on their involvement, working-class parents are given less access to the available cultural "capital," e.g., educational background materials, physical resources, information network, and social intercourse which facilitate parent-school participation. Working-class parents are not only perceived as devaluating their children's education, but their maladaptive cultural fit becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, from the school's perspective, if a parent is believed to be uncaring about education as a desirable cultural value, then why provide any more than that which is minimally required? If, as a result, the child's educational evaluations suffer in comparison to other groups, there is some confidence on the part of the school that extra-curricula activities would not have helped. On the contrary, when parents are good cultural fits—that is, their style of social interaction with school personnel, as well as their apparent high level of motivation and values evidenced by their appearance at all school functions—this supports an idealized pattern of response by the school. When children of these parents show academic progress, the responses become reinforced and are believed to have been "proper."

Due to teacher interpretations of parental involvement (or lack of it) as a reflection of parents' value of education, working-class parents "lose" on two accounts: (1) less access to the cultural capital (i.e., educational background, material resources, information networks) that facilitate parent participation in ways desired by the school, and (2) being perceived as parents who valued their children's education to a lesser extent. Lareau's study challenges the notion that the "good idea" of parent-school partnership can be simplistically applied to a heterogeneous public school population. In addition, and indirectly related to the present study, Lareau's research addresses mediating social factors which can affect school participation patterns of Hispanic working-class parents.

Goldenberg (1989) studied the effect of parental involvement on children's reading group placement. His three subjects were all Spanish-dominant first graders from Hispanic, working-class families. At the beginning of their first grade year, all three children were in first grade and in the lowest reading group. However, two of the three children advanced to the high group during the year, while one child remained struggling in the low group. One clear difference among the children emerged from a study of their home experiences. One parent whose child advanced rapidly taught her daughter to read, gave her daughter tasks beyond homework, and directly questioned an unclear homework assignment. The parents

of the other child who advanced were told of their son's troubles with reading early in the year. Initially surprised and angered, the parents began a program of direct help in reading and improving their son's motivation. The mother attended her son's classes during the reading period every day for two weeks, and then began to tutor him at home. The father verbally encouraged his son.

In contrast, the parents of the third child described in the study were unaware of their son's problems and did not know that they should have taken a more active role in their child's schooling. Goldenberg attributed placement of the two students in the higher reading group to their parents' more active role, direct help, and motivation. Goldenberg's study is important in a number of ways. First, it points out the **variation** in literacy roles among parents with very similar backgrounds. All parents in his study were immigrants with low socioeconomic status, had less than a sixth-grade education, and were Spanish-speaking. The range of literacy interaction in the home is often masked in larger, quantitative studies, or studies such as Lareau's, where homogeneity (with respect to school involvement) is assumed. Secondly, this study examines specific parent-children interactions in Hispanic homes which impact upon children's achievement. This level of specificity is necessary if parental participation programs are to mature.

Goldenberg's study raises other questions. Are the etiological factors simply "more help" and motivation at home, or are other causes at work here? Does changing the parents' role from relatively "independent" (e.g., the parents assume that the school has the primary responsibility for teaching the child [Lareau, 1989: 79]) to an "interdependent" role (e.g., where the parents accept a teaching and interactional role) effect scholastic outcomes? Our study examines such questions, utilizing a group of subject families similar to Goldenberg's, whose children were also placed in different reading ability groups using the framework of Parent Mentorship.

Trueba (1987), among others (Spindler, 1955, 1982), has argued that the school has a particular culture which caters to the Anglo mainstream population. This suggests that parents of minority children need to learn how the school system operates in order to help their children succeed academically. Successful participation requires parents as well as children to know what services are available and how to use them. To gain access to the school system's resources, minority students must become informed through parental involvement with school personnel.

Empowerment and Parent Mentorship

In previous work, we have advanced the concept of parents as mentors. This role is much like a tutor in the subject of school culture (Delgado-Gaitan, (1986, 1987). A mentor is an individual who (a) interprets the phenomenon for the student, (b) encourages students to believe in their abilities, (c) recognizes and acts upon the importance of their own teaching/mediating role, and (d) is actively involved

in the learning environment to provide support to students. In the Delgado-Gaitan studies (1986, 1987), the parents acted as mentors and were able to mediate between students who chose to stay in school and those who dropped out. This was a crucial factor which differentiated between home and school culture, providing interpretation, support, and a pro-active role.

In mentoring, parents entrusted students with responsibility for their own learning, considered them to be intelligent, and expected them to succeed in school. The parents manifested their commitment by organizing the home's social environment so as to include substantial parent-child interaction. Parental emotional support and intervention for students fostered educational success by helping them secure the resources they needed in school. This emotional and technical support established through parent mentorship over the course of their children's education taught students how to access the school system by asking the right questions and learning to ask them in the "right way," in other words, children of parents who could access the school's Anglo culture and communicate this to their children tended to do better scholastically. Conversely, some Mexican-American students who dropped out of school failed to understand important sociocultural knowledge (e.g., to whom questions should be addressed and under what circumstances). This sociocultural knowledge and access to school resources would have maximized their learning opportunities.

In these studies, one specific aspect of parental mentorship role is emphasized: parents (or others acting in that role) serve as social and cultural **brokers** for their children in school-related matters. Parents directly intervene by inquiring about or challenging school policies as part of their perceived task of helping their children resolve social and academic problems.

This process is well-documented in other sociological studies. Not only are values primarily transmitted by parents to children, but as parents involve themselves with the school's sociocultural environment, they learn, as do their children, about culturally appropriate behavior (principally rooted in a mainstream Anglo culture) which elicits the "best" responses. (Learning is always a two-way street.) In this case, the best responses for the Mexican parents to learn are those which provide meaningful answers to questions, assistance in academic work and extra-curricula activities, and maximized access to all of the resources which are theoretically and practically available to a school's client population. Eventually, children are able to access these resources without direct parental involvement. Not unimportantly, but possibly incidental to this process, comes improved academic achievement. In this sense, "incidental" is used to mean that improved scholastic achievement comes not as a direct A-causes-B phenomenon, but rather as a consequence of a whole range of outcomes which result from improved access to sociocultural resources. Children feel better about themselves, parents feel that they are meaningfully involved, and parents feel part of the mainstream school culture. It is not a simple "you do this" and then "this will result."

The process is diachronic. The "partnership" described in these programs may be somewhat euphemistic; this is, they promise, as described in the several articles recently published, more than is realistically delivered. Parental **empowerment** requires a certain level of self-confidence and courage on the part of the school. Real empowerment obliges parents to critically reflect upon their own and their children's life circumstances, and to influence the people and institutions within that field (Cochran, 1987). These programs, and others like them, fit best within a new category—one that acknowledges the unequal status relationships and proposes to challenge them: the Home-School Empowerment Programs (Delgado-Gaitan, in press). The Parent Mentorship Model is an exemplar of this new type. It is hoped that our study and the discussion of the mentorship process which follows may help in understanding and encouraging questions about how empowered parents socialize their children into becoming empowered students and citizens.

In the following section, the parental mentorship process surrounding 18 children in a third-grade classroom is analyzed. The children were assigned to three different reading levels. The school and parents are described first, followed by discussion of the parents' participation in the children's schooling. Then a case in which a parent accepts the school's definition of a problem is contrasted with a case in which the parent challenges the school's explanation. The article concludes by discussing how parents can play a key role in socializing children to participate meaningfully in school by learning the sociopolitical rules of the school. A number of successful parent involvement programs which have built upon the research discussed in this paper are cited.

The Study

About Carpinteria

Fifteen miles south of Santa Barbara is Carpinteria[1], a small residential community with a population of about 12,000. Mexicans constitutes about 35 percent of the population; less than 50 percent are limited-English-speaking. Mexican families in Carpinteria emigrated from different parts of Mexico (e.g., Guadalajara, Guerrero, Mexico City), from both major cities and small rural towns. Most Mexicans in Carpinteria have lived there more than 10 years and have younger children born in the community. The average size of the Mexican working-class family is six, including the parents and children.

There are a few small industries in Carpinteria, including an aluminum factory and nurseries. Numerous ranches also outline the area, providing a source of employment for those Mexican men who do landscape work. Women also work, and their places of employment tend to be primarily in the plant nurseries or

housekeeping jobs in motels and ranches. Despite the seasonal nature of employment, Mexican families believe they can readily find work there.

Soaring rents in the area have created a devastating financial burden for the Mexicans as well as for other renters in the Carpinteria community. In 1987, the average yearly family income was less than $13,000 (despite the fact that often two or more adults in the home worked full-time). The high rents have forced many extended families to live together in small one- or two-bedroom apartments. A few live in small homes or on their own ranches on the outskirts of town; others have bought small mobile homes as an alternative to paying exorbitant rents.

Four elementary schools, one junior high school, and one high school comprise the Carpinteria School District. This study was conducted in the Marina Elementary School. The school is adjacent to a freeway exit, and is surrounded by a residential area comprised of single-family dwellings, a new condominium complex, and small older apartments which are the residences of large numbers of Mexican families whose children attend Marina School. Marina School's Mexican population is about 35 percent; about 14 percent of the total student school enrollment is limited-English-speaking. During the data collection period of the study (1986-1987), the school was composed of second through sixth grades. Subsequently, there were changes made, and Marina School is now comprised of third through sixth grades. A bilingual program exists at Marina and provides services to the limited-English-speaking students.

Selection of Subjects

This study examined the role of parents in the academic socialization of 18 Mexican American children in different reading groups in a third-grade classroom. It focused on early home patterns of socialization to school by means of which children learned how to access information from their teachers and other authorities. Ethnographic data collected from home interactions with children and parent interactions with teachers are used here to illustrate how parents assisted their children in coping with school-related issues.

The students in the study were distributed among high-, middle-, and low-Spanish reading groups. Three were in high reading groups (which read one grade above grade norm), seven read in middle groups, and eight students were in low reading groups (which read at least one year below norm). Initially, the classroom reading levels served as a convenient way of selecting the key participants. Two principal research questions were posed: (a) What is the degree of effective parental intervention of children in high and low reading groups? and (b) How does parental communication with the teacher affect student participation in school? The students and their families were observed in the home and at school over a period of nine months. Activities in which parents and children dealt with school-related activities were carefully observed. Selected characteristics of the 18

Table 1

Family Profiles

Family Profiles of the 18 Parents with Children in Low, Middle, and High Reading Levels

Characteristic	Low (n=8)	Middle (n=7)	High (n=3)
Household income under $13,000	8	7	3
Average members in households is 6 or higher	2	3	
Average members in households is less than 6	5	4	3
Parents studied 6th grade and under in Mexico	8	5	2
One parent in family completed high school in Mexico		2	
Laborer or service occupations of adults in households	8	7	3
Both Parents employed full-time	6	6	2
Households in which mothers are employed part-time	2	1	1
One or more children in household attended a bilingual preschool	3	6	3

families in the study are presented in Table 1.

A series of ethnographic interviews were also conducted with parents; the goal was to determine the different ways in which they participated in their children's schooling. The interviews revealed the parents' educational backgrounds and their motivation for involving themselves in the school. Parents discussed the nature of their children's school-related problems and their strategy for dealing with them. Teachers were also interviewed.

Observations employed audiotapes (and utilized field notes) of parent/child interactions in the home as they performed school-related activities. Such interactions revealed the parental expectations for school behavior and achievement. Observations also included parental visits to the school, classroom teacher/student interactions, and teacher/parent conferences.

Findings and Analysis

Teacher's Perceptions of Parental Involvement

The bilingual teachers at Marina school unanimously agreed that parental participation in the school was important to students' achievement. Most of the bilingual teachers reported excellent parent representation during parent/teacher conferences and open-house activities. But beyond simple attendance at school functions and conferences, teachers believed that other evidence of parental involvement, such as frequent on-going communication with parents, was related to students' academic achievement. This was particularly observed by a third-grade teacher who made the following comment about a student in the middle reading group:

> She tries hard even though she's still not in the high group, she's improved a lot. When she first came to my class she was in the low group, but her mother started helping her and she was always sending me notes to make sure I sent homework. Now I'm really proud of her. I wish all parents were so cooperative.

As a result of her mother's support, this child was perceived by the teacher as a good student. In contrast, other children were perceived to be intelligent, but not as hardworking, due to the infrequent communication on the part of parents. As the same teacher remarked about a boy that was in the low group:

> He's really very intelligent, but his mother is so over-protective that he doesn't think he has to do much work. If the mother would only push him more, he'd be more advanced in his reading.

In essence, the teacher's perceptions about the desirability of parental involvement affected their objectivity toward students.

The teacher also expressed compassion about parents' inability to help their children as frequently as Anglo mainstream parents could. She was aware that their

long work schedules and lack of literacy skills prevented them from assisting their children in academic tasks. However, the teacher was adamant that parents should encourage their children to succeed in school. As the teacher noted:

> It really makes a difference when the parents read my notes about their student's progress and send me notes. I feel like I can count on them to push on their end.

According to the teacher's statements, parent communication with her even to the point of parent-initiated written communication, was expected, and deemed necessary for students' academic success. Yet for Mexican parents, participating in the school was a new experience, because they neither attended school in the United States, nor participated in the schools in Mexico.

Parent Participation in Children's Schooling

Mexican households in the study unanimously believed that education was important. The parents defined success for children in both academic and social terms. They not only expected their children to receive excellent grades, but to cooperate with their teachers and classmates. This aspect of the parents in the study supported the findings of other ethnographic studies of Hispanic parents in the United States. Hispanic parents manifest meaningful and sincere concern for their children's progress in school and value education highly (Delgado-Gaitan, 1987a; Goldenberg, 1987). Survey studies of Hispanic parents have also confirmed this finding (Chavkin & Williams, 1988).

However, parents varied in the ways they participated in their children's schooling and in their levels of involvement in the school. Some families participated in school-based literacy activities with their children at home, but had minimal contact with the teacher. Although some families communicated frequently with the teacher about their children's academic performance and held their children accountable for completing their academic tasks, they did not read to their children at home. Still other parents did not communicate frequently with teachers, although they attempted to help their children in their school-related tasks because their children were, according to teachers' reports, underachieving in school.

The different levels of parental participation appeared to exist independently of parental educational attainment. The majority of the parents had less than a sixth grade education in Mexico; only two had the equivalent of high school in Mexico. The differences in the way parents dealt with their children's school-related problems indicated two main approaches to the school. Parents of children in the higher reading levels were directly involved with the school and intervened in their children's school problems, while other parents accepted the school's authority and maintained minimal contact with the school regarding their children's academic and social adjustment.

Families in the study appeared to find students' homework tasks a source of anxiety due to parents' lack of confidence in their own literacy skills. Some parents challenged the teachers' reports that their children were not doing well and involved themselves in learning how to help their children. Other parents accepted the teacher's reports and felt incompetent to change the situation. Table 2 outlines the type of contacts which parents had with the teachers. The distinction between the nature of the contact between parents of low-, middle-, and high-achieving readers shows that there is a qualitative difference in the way that teachers communicate with parents, depending on the children's level of reading. Subsequent sections will delineate the specific way in which the results of Table 2 are expressed.

Accepting the School's Explanations

Of the 18 families who participated in the study, 11 had minimal communication and contact with the school. They attended the yearly teacher/parent conferences and open house activities, but did not initiate contact with the school.

Eight of the 11 children in families with inactive parents read in low-reading groups. Of the remaining three, one read at the grade norm and the other two read above grade norm.

The homework factor emerged as significant in understanding parental involvement. Issues of grade evaluation, quantity of homework, appropriateness, and difficulty of task catalyzed parents to respond with feelings of incompetence and antagonism toward the school, or mobilized them to question and challenge the teacher. All students were assigned homework regularly, particularly if their work in class had not been completed. The tasks consisted of "ditto" sheets requiring students to fill in a word or phrase in Spanish. Following is an description of parent/child interaction in the home involving homework:

> One child was observed to have brought home seven ditto pages one evening, and spent two-and-one-half hours completing them. The mother's help was solicited; she helped her daughter by giving most of the answers as she knew them. The mother continuously interrupted the child and told her to pay attention and hold the pencil correctly. Ultimately, the seven sheets were completed with little extended, verbal interaction between the mother and child except for the mother's single word suggestions to fill in. In this case, the child actually completed the homework.

Children often fail to complete their assignments because the parents were not available to assist them. The 11 children in this group whose parents had minimal contact with the school typically had a fixed homework schedule set for them by their parents. Much of the time, however, the children did not follow through in

Table 2

Frequency Of Parent-School Contact

Type and Frequency of Contact during an 8-month Period between the School and the 18 Parents of Students in Respective Reading Groups

Type of Contact	Low (n=8)	Middle (n=7)	High (n=3)
Weekly teacher reports	8	7	3
Reports-sole contact with school	1		1
Teacher reports inconsistent with student performance	7	3	
Quarterly teacher conferences	3	7	3
Conferences-sole contact with school	3	1	
Teacher tells parents vs. discusses with them	3	1	1
Parents initiate additional contact with teacher regarding student problem	1	5	2
No personal contact with teacher, would like to meet with teachers, but claim language barrier	5	1	

completing the homework unless the parents actually stayed with them and provided direct assistance.

The teacher utilized the homework as a way to check completion, but no feedback was provided. The instructional routine continued in class; the child read in the low group and more of the same type of homework was assigned. If the homework was not completed, the teacher sent a note home with the child indicating that he/she should spend more time completing the homework and suggested to parents that they should provide assistance with reading.

Upon receiving the teacher's report, the parents read the report and talked to the student as exemplified here[2]:

> Alicia hands her mother the teacher's report.
> Mother: "What's this?"
> Alicia: "My report."
> Mother: [The report read that Alicia was doing very well in all her classwork but needed to practice reading more at home.] "It says that you need to practice reading."
> Alicia: "I don't know what to read."
> Mother: "That's not right. Why don't you bring a book from school?"
> Alicia: "I forget."
> Mother: "Dear, we didn't have the opportunity that you have. You should take advantage and learn all that you can. If you don't know something, ask. Your father and I can help you in whatever way we can."
> Alicia: "But I don't know how to read some words."
> Mother: "Well then you have to ask me or your father to help you. From now on you'll have to bring a book to read from school and you'll have to read it before you watch TV."

There was no follow-through in making sure Alicia brought a book home from school to read. The child continued to receive reports that indicated the need for Alicia to practice reading at home.

Typically, Alicia's parents paid attention to the teacher's reports regarding the child's school achievement. They interpreted the reports as being accurate about the student's ability and attempted to correct the situation by imposing strict rules of behavior for doing homework assignments to correcting a reading problem. The parents took upon themselves the task of organizing the children into a routine. They reiterated the suggestions made by the teacher, and then placed the burden on the child to perform. In Alicia's case, the problem was that neither the child nor the parents had the necessary knowledge or direction from the school to modify her low motivation and low reading skills. The lack of follow-through by the parents is best explained by their uncertainty in this situation rather than lack of motivation.

In this case, the child's reading problem needed to be resolved by the teacher and other component school personnel directly or indirectly. However, the teacher expected the parents to assist with the child's problem by following general, nonspecific instructions. The teacher did not consider the complex set of skills required by parents to deal with underachievement in reading.

The study findings discussed here are supported by other ethnographic work with U. S. Hispanic families. These studies also report that parents are deeply interested in what teachers say about their children, but that the schools failed to provide specific and consistent directions. (Delgado-Gaitan, 1987c; Goldenberg, 1984; Valdes, 1986).

The question of availability of appropriate materials in the home, e. g., children's books in Spanish, is also relevant. Assumptions that all families have access to children's books in the Spanish language is unwarranted. Furthermore, studies of storybook routines among working class Mexican families have found that they occur with less frequency than in middle-class families. This is a specific area where a school-home program could benefit from relevant research (including the present study). Using this knowledge and forming policy recommendations, the teacher would have given Alicia's parents more direct guidance in storybook reading, and provided needed materials (children's books in Spanish). Furthermore, the teacher would have known that U. S. Mexican families have more frequent literacy events that are embedded in practical activities (e.g., shopping lists, letters, etc.) (Anderson & Stokes, 1982; Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Trueba, Moll, & Diaz, 1982). These activities are excellent supporters of literacy development. It is also hoped that the **teacher** included such authentic literacy activities in her classroom, not only because they occurred naturally and frequently outside of school, but also because bilingual children show greater "investment" and manifest the upper range of their abilities in such literacy activities (Edelsky, 1986; Ruiz, 1988, 1989).

Challenging the School's Explanations

Children of parents who participated more actively at school usually read at grade norms or above, with the exception of one subject who read one year below grade norms. These parents (nine of the 18 parents in the study) initiated contact more frequently with the school regarding their children's academic performance. Three types of parent-initiated communication with the third-grade teacher were observed: (1) parents questioned the teacher's report regarding the student's academic performance; (2) parents were concerned about students' discipline in school; and (3) parents requested ways in which to help their children at home.

An important predictor of parents' involvement was whether or not the children in this study had attended the Carpinteria Bilingual Preschool. Whereas only three of the eight low readers had attended the preschool, six of the seven

middle readers and all of the high readers had attended. The bilingual preschool teacher had relied on a strong parent component and impressed upon the parents the importance of communicating with the school regarding curriculum and their children's performance. The monthly parent training motivated the parents to overcome their fear and ignorance about the school system and encouraged them to participate in their children's schooling. The skills which parents acquired in the preschool training remained with them as their children advanced in school.

As stated previously, all parents, in the study, in general, valued schooling for their children. At home, this meant reminding students to pay attention in class, to study hard, and to learn all that is possible. Of particular significance was the fact that some parents possessed the knowledge necessary to ensure that their directions were carried out. They initiated contacts with the teachers regarding their children's assignments and conduct, and asked about ways in which to support them at home.

Academic reports went home weekly with the students. For most of the students who were placed in the more advanced reading groups, the reports were positive, and some included a statement indicating that the student should continue to study at home as well as review their multiplication tables. Some of the parents commented that they did not need to talk to the teacher because their children were doing well. However, the majority of parents spoke to their children about what the teacher wrote, such as:

> The teacher says that you have to study your times tables. Don't forget. It's good that you're doing well in reading. Put it away so that you can show your father when he gets home.

Some of the parents walked the students to school on Monday and talked briefly with the teacher before class began. The teacher welcomed the parents and asked them to stay awhile. Generally, the parent requested the child to join the conversation with the teacher.

Parents frequently spoke to the teachers about their concerns; they wanted their children to learn the multiplication tables and requested materials from the school to help him/her at home. The teacher usually complied by lending the child a set of flashcards which could be checked out at the end of the day. Parents often reminded the child to bring the item home at the end of the day:

> You have to remind the teacher to give you the flashcards at the end of the day. OK, don't forget.

Rarely did children forget to ask the teacher for the materials to take home. On occasion, the students would start walking home and return to school breathlessly and enthusiastically to pick up the materials.

At the end of a few weeks, the students no longer needed to rely on their parents to personally request special materials for homework. They asked the teacher to lend them books, games, paper, or any other aids with which to study at home. One of the students commented:

> For me, it's like a game because my mother can help me with my studies when I bring home other materials and we can play school at home.

This student's enthusiasm was typical of many of the students in the classroom. The teacher fostered this attitude in class, and the parent's role reinforced the child's motivation to pursue learning.

Although concern about homework was the most frequent motive for parental intervention, other concerns prompted the parents to contact the school. Behavior problems and disciplining (which the parents may have thought to be unfair) resulted in frequent parental visits to the school. For example, Veto was an advanced reader who had difficulty, as the teacher described it, "keeping his hands to himself." He was continuously getting into trouble because children complained that he pushed them, hit them, or touched them in an annoying manner. Veto always said that he was sorry and that he did not mean to do it. The teacher's weekly reports to his parents usually made some reference to his conduct. Twice a month, Veto and his mother met with the teacher concerning his behavior, even though it meant his mother taking time off from work. The teacher assured the mother that Veto was a nice boy, tried hard to do good work, and received good grades in all of his subjects, as evidenced by the fact that he was an advanced reader. His preoccupation with physical contact was a concern for the parent, who wanted her child to "behave." The mother continued to communicate with the teacher through notes and personal meetings. Finally, by the end of May, the mother became annoyed that the teacher was only calling attention to Veto's behavior and disregarding the fact that other children could be involved in the problem. Her comments to the teacher in Veto's presence were:

> You have the responsibility to see how the rest also contribute to the problem. I'm not convinced that my son is the only one at fault. He always tells me that he's not doing it on purpose. He's not a bad boy. He's a good boy. I'm not saying he's a saint, but neither are the others. Let me see why the others complain so much. Let me talk with them. Right now I have to go to work but I expect that you, Veto, stop touching others and if it's true that they don't want you to touch them, then don't do it unless you ask them for permission.

The boy looked confused and responded:

> They say that I push them, but it's not true. I just put my hand like this.

The mother continued:

> Well, I'm telling you that I don't want them to complain about you anymore and you're only going to touch someone if they give you permission to touch them. Understand?

Mrs. Ramos, the teacher, sat quietly for a few moments and then assured the

parent that she was not passing false judgment against her son and that other children were treated equally. They also were expected to keep their hands to themselves. The few days that followed were uneventful, as Veto made every effort to physically avoid touching anyone. A few days later, Veto was standing in line with other students and a boy ran up against him and pushed him and others in front. The children all looked at Veto and yelled, "Stop it!" He quickly defended himself and said, "Not me, it was him!" He pointed at the boy who stood behind him talking to his friends. The teacher came out to let the class in and found the children pointing fingers at each other. After her fact-finding questions, she commented to Veto, "Veto, remember what your mother said." The boy looked angry that he had been accused, and walked into the classroom with the rest. He walked up to the teacher and told her in a soft voice:

> I know you think I pushed the others out there, but I want you to know that I changed and that I don't do those things anymore and I don't want to be blamed for things that I don't do.

The teacher ignored Veto's comment other than to tell him to sit down. Veto's self-assertion signaled that he had internalized his mother's expectations to the point that he no longer accepted false accusations made by his teacher. The intervention on the part of Veto's mother's created changes in his learning to deal with the sociopolitical culture of the classroom. Whether or not Veto had initially been misbehaving is almost irrelevant, because the teacher and classmates learned to make a scapegoat of him to the extent that he could no longer defend himself. The mother's intervention was necessary to help Veto understand that he had to take responsibility for his actions, but that he also had to stand up for himself. Veto recognized his rights as a person and developed the courage and skill to challenge as well as question. As a result, Veto knew that he was acting according to the rules of the school. When he was wrongly assumed to be misbehaving, he knew enough to address the teacher as the authority and to insist that he not be misjudged.

Discussion: Interpreting the School Culture

The role of the parent as a mentor was particularly evident in the way that parents modeled to their children how to advocate for their rights. As parents emphasized to their children the importance of doing well in school by negotiating with the teacher regarding the students learning and social behavior, students learned to think about their role in their schooling and began to accept responsibility for it. This exemplifies the mentor role outlined earlier in the paper which establishes the role as (a) an interpreter of the phenomenon for the student, (b) an advocate for the student's abilities, (c) a mediator for conflicts, and (d) an actively-involved person in the student's learning environment both at home and school.

The school culture in Marina School dictated that parents actively participate in school by inquiring about students' achievement and assisting their children in

the home with school-related tasks. The problem was that some of the Mexican families did not possess these skills: they did not know what was expected of them, specifically, to request materials to help their children.

Diverse levels of parental intervention in their children's schooling existed among the Mexican families in Carpinteria. Differential involvement was due to differences in parents' knowledge of the school system and confidence in their role as partner in their children's schooling. The active parents in this study learned that they must continuously ask questions to learn what the school expected of them. It was this dialogue and either its difficulty or facility that made the difference to their children's achievement.

Communicating with the school seemed easy to parents who learned to be involved but very difficult for others whose experiences had not yet provided them with the same opportunity. Those who were more active saw school as a place where their children could learn. If there were any problems that prevented their children from accomplishing this goals, these parents took action. There was an implicit trust in their children's abilities, and a perception of the institution as the service provider. Thus, if any problems occurred, they did not hesitate to contact the school to resolve the problem. The children, in turn, learned both from the school and their parents' attitudes that services were available to them.

Although parents of children in the lower reading group sincerely believed in the importance of schooling, they believed that the children's lack of motivation (as well as their own meager literacy skills) accounted for their children's underachievement. If the children were unsuccessful at school, it was the children's fault. Conversely, they did not find fault in the system or its bureaucratic institutions. Some parents felt they could not assist their children because of their own lack of formal schooling; their feelings of isolation added to their powerlessness. The school's inconsistent provision of materials and directions to parents to help them aid their children's literacy education exacerbated this group's isolation.

Children who are in low reading groups experience academic problems, but not solely because their parents cannot be advocates for them; the dynamics of parent involvement and student school achievement are too complex to be explained by a single dimension of their relationship. It is, however, possible that many of these children internalized their parents', teachers', and self-perceptions of being slow learners who view their learning problems as their fault.

In this study, those parents who were most active as mentors held out specific goals for their children. They interacted frequently with their children at home both with school- and non-school-related activities and learned how to communicate with supportive teachers. Parents who knew how to deal with the school system were able to better assist their children academically. This mentoring provided the children with knowledge and direction for becoming independent learners and for interacting directly with their teachers.

Implications for Parental Education and Empowerment

The preschool parental education component played a key role in teaching parents about the school culture. This suggests a need for well-organized parental education programs and/ or networks that provide parent knowledge of the school system in order to maximize their role as parents and socializers. This support was not available to parents after the children left preschool. This study points to a pressing need for a support program that will incorporate parents into the school structure (and provide a vehicle for intra-group support). It is necessary for such a program to address the parents' feelings of isolation and the disparity in academic achievement between parents and less active parents.

For example, monthly Carpinteria School District parent meetings became the vehicle to assist parents of Mexican students. Parents spoke of their concerns until they became convinced that they had the right, responsibility, and power to deal with their children's academic and social concerns about school. Part of the parent education plan provided school support groups that assisted parents in sharing common concerns. Parent groups were organized to help parents recognize the commonalty in the kinds of problems they experienced. This feature of the program targeted the issue of isolation which many parents expressed. Isolation engenders fear and negatively effects children's and parents' meaningful participation in school. This issue was expressed by all parents, including the active ones. Thus, the study (see Delgado-Gaitan, in press) verified the need for parents to engage in parent networks with others who had acquired more experience in schools and who provided assistance when necessary.

Active parents possessed specific skills that were required to help their children at home and to interact with the school. The expert guidance one person extended to another provided the basis for learning. Parental mentorship describes the continual guidance process of emotional and informational support that parents provide their children in order to gain access to school resources. Thus, a successful program must respect the cultural integrity of goals and strategies for relating with the school as well as helping their children at home. Besides indicating those factors related to increased parental involvement, this study also pointed out the continuing and unfortunate impediments to parent participation in schools, impediments particularly troublesome for parents with less cultural capital from the viewpoint of the school.

The school in general: 1) did not consistently provide materials to parents to help their children; 2) gave few specifics as to how parents were to help their children; and 3) did not recognize the contribution of the "home curriculum" and the parents' **effective** teaching role within that setting and curriculum.

Fortunately, there have been some successful home-parent programs which have addressed these impediments, some of which have also included attention to the role of parents as mentors. Two programs of parent involvement that

incorporate the mentorship model have been associated with parents gaining greater access to resources and extending their networks of families, friends, and service-providers (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990). Also embedded in these programs were the acknowledgment of parents as the primary teachers of their children and recognition of the importance of the "home curriculum" (Ruiz, 1989). Both programs took into account the fewer resources initially available to some of the working class and minority families (Lareau, 1989) and facilitated the opportunity to obtain them as part of the project.

The Family Matters Program, based at Cornell University and carried out in Syracuse, New York, originally involved 276 families (Cochran, 1987). About one-third were Afro-American families and one-third were single-parent families. The program began with two principal assumptions: 1) that all families have some strengths, and 2) that much of the knowledge about rearing children rests among the people, "...across generations, in the networks, and in the historically and culturally rooted folkways of ethnic and cultural traditions, rather than in the heads of college professors, trained professionals, or books written by experts" (Cochran, 1987: 13-14). The major goals of the program were to find ways of recognizing the parent as expert, and to set up an **exchange** of information about children, the neighborhood, community services, and schools, as opposed to the mere dispensing of information.

The research staff first made visits to the families' homes, looking for activities which the parents viewed as important to children's development. These activities were compiled in book form and shared among the families. The project also accommodated the individual preferences of the families. The original intent was to have two groups, one comprised of families who participated principally in the home visit format, the other made up of families who periodically met in groups. But feelings of isolation among some of the first group and preferences for individual contact at home among the second group caused the program to be restructured in order to provide options that best suited the individual family's needs and preference.

Results of the Family Matters Program included changes in the mothers' self-perceptions and increased efforts on their part to reach out not only to the primary family group (spouse and children), but also to relatives, neighbors, and friends. The change process was documented by researchers through questionnaires completed by the children's teachers.

One of the most important contributions of the Family Matters Program was its development of the concept of empowerment in parent-school programs. The Carpinteria Family Literacy Project (Allexsaht-Snider, 1991; Delgado-Gaitan, in press) utilizes and builds on this concept.

Delgado-Gaitan and colleagues studied Spanish-speaking families as they participated in a project involving parents interacting with their children and other parents in literacy activities—reading children's books in Spanish. The project

arose from Delgado-Gaitan's earlier research with families in Carpinteria. This research revealed that by the time Spanish-speaking children were in the third or fourth grade, their parents were intimidated by the barrier presented by English language homework, and parent-child interaction in literacy events decreased. In response to these findings, project personnel instituted a program adapted from Ada's (1988) article, where she recounted her experiences working with Hispanic families and children's books in Spanish. The implicit assumptions that family literacy could create access to participation and break down social isolation patterns gave way to understanding not only the effects of the program on child-parent home literacy events, but also the effects on the social networks of the participating parents.

Briefly, the procedure was to have a Spanish-speaking parent (with an interest in children's literacy) and project personnel meet with other parents to read and talk about children's books in Spanish. Families chose a book to take home and read or discuss with their children. The meetings stressed ways the parents could devise to relate the books to their children's personal experiences.

As expected, one result of the project was a change in the quantity and quality of story-time routines distributed among the families. Ada (1988) also documented similar results, including the findings that parents' perceptions of themselves as readers improved. But changes from the Carpinteria program were not confined to the family setting. As in the Family Matters Program, parent and community networks were affected. For example, some parents participating in the programs put on a one-day conference where successful techniques were presented to other parents. Parental involvement in the local school advisory group improved as both they and parents from the Family Literacy Project communicated. The Carpinteria Family Literacy Project has concluded that as the families interacted in with new settings and new materials to acquire new literacy skills, they became empowered through the process of social interaction, and, consequently, community organization.

Applied research projects such as the Family Matters Program and the Carpinteria Family Literacy Project build on the strengths of the families. As families worked collectively with others they learned at their own pace and became aware of their potential. They transformed perceived limitations into new conceptions of self and group, benefiting themselves and their children.

Future research and training projects would do well to follow the models cited above and acknowledge the complex social, cultural, and educational needs that impinge upon parent-school relationships. Based on our own studies of parent participation, we suggest that examining the mentorship role of parents will help in explaining successful parent involvement programs.

Notes

1. Except for the name Carpinteria, all other personal nouns used in the descriptions in this paper are pseudonyms. We received permission from the school district to use its name, but have protected the privacy of all personal names of teachers, parents, and children.
2. All of the English text of conversations has been translated from Spanish. In the interest of saving space and because our paper did not emphasize sociolinguistic analysis, we have not included the Spanish text of the conversations.

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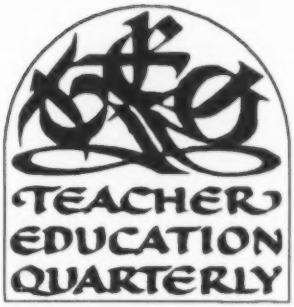

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Dismantling Educational Apartheid: Case Studies from South Africa

By Beverly Lindsay

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On October 24, 1991, the South African Minister of Education and Training, Sam de Beer, stated, "It is quite clear that the Government is committed to devising a new education system" and that "We are in the process of phasing out the Department of Education and Training [designed solely for Black education]...and [to] start talking of a system to address the needs of all our people."[1] A forum would be convened wherein all parties with an interest in education would discuss the new education system. This announcement could suggest, on the one hand, that strides have occurred since H. F. Verwoerd (Minister of Native Affairs when the 1953 Bantu Education Act was passed) asserted "When I have control over native education, I will reform it so that natives will be taught from childhood that equality with Europeans is not for them."[2]

On the other hand, Minister DeBeer's announcement highlights myriads of issues that exist and will

emerge in dismantling educational apartheid, especially since many government critics immediately denounced the statements because they did not "go far enough."[3] That is, the provision of one education system with equal provisions for all students was not forthcoming, as was also the case in June 1991 when the Government released the *Educational Renewal Strategy*.[4] This Government document ostensibly professed new philosophical premises and practical measures for changing South African education with benefits for various groups. Moreover, the October announcement and the reactions by critics are harbingers of issues associated with the development of a unitary educational system--an area of unconditional agreement by major actors among Blacks (Africans), Coloureds, and Indians **and** by many progressive Whites--wherein new philosophies, policies, and functions of the new system must be negotiated **and** an alternative and emergent role for administrators must be developed and refined.

This article, via synopsis of illustrative case studies with fictional names for primary schools, seeks to explicate contemporary educational conditions resulting from apartheid and its sociopolitical manifestations. In discussing the case studies, attention will be devoted to the pivotal role of the principal or headmaster/headmistress and school administration in relation to characteristics of effective schools. The characteristics include: (1) a principal who exhibits administrative and leadership skills and whose authority is respected; (2) a penetrating climate of management and organizational development; (3) a pervasive climate of teaching by the instructional staff; and (4) a comprehensive climate of learning for and by all students.[5] Differences between effective school environments and the ineffective environments, found with frequency in South Africa, will be analyzed.

A following section provides a critical analysis of how apartheid caused or accentuated four features--political conditions, comprehensive integration, resource distribution, and administrative competence--which curtailed effective schooling. This article concludes with suggestions for new administrative roles and policies so that effective schools in a unitary system may become the norm in a post-apartheid period.

Methodology

In-depth observations, with particular attention to the roles of principals and administrative structures, were undertaken at White, Coloured, Indian, and African schools in different geographical areas of South Africa. Schools in African townships, self-governing territories (explained in the following section), urban locales, and rural shack residential areas were visited. The observations were undertaken in the fall of 1991. An interview schedule was developed in cooperation with educators (from all racial and ethnic groups referred to as "nonracial" in South African nomenclature) in Capetown, Durban, Johannesburg, and Pretoria. This schedule was used in discussions and interviews with a wide range of school

administrators, teachers, parents, researchers, university faculty, policymakers, and civic and political leaders. These interviews supplemented the findings from the observations.

While this comprehensive approach was used, several caveats should be kept in mind. First, there is some skepticism about American and international research consultants, in conjunction with South African educators, being able to assess quickly the multiple political, economic, and sociocultural features influencing education. Second, in this regard, some individuals were reluctant to talk openly with American educators in light of political factors such as the United States' imposition of sanctions, and for others, the recent lifting of some sanctions. Third, while a range of primary schools were visited and a host of individuals were consulted, the time constraints precluded travel to some parts of South Africa. This also meant that equal amounts of time were not spent at school sites. Nevertheless, these case studies highlight dynamic school conditions which are influenced by apartheid.

Administrative Structures and Policies

A succinct description of the South African education structures is warranted to understand their effect on local schools. There are 15 departments of education in South Africa designed to address the needs of various racial and ethnic groups. Created as a result of the 1984 Education Act, the Department of National Education (DNE) develops policy for all education departments and thus works closely with the other 14 education departments. The Minister of National Education, after consultations with other education ministers, proposes policies regarding formal, informal, and nonformal education that cover several areas. These include: (1) norms and standards for financing and capital costs of education; (2) professional registration of teachers; (3) standards for syllabi; and (4) conditions of employment and salaries for staff. This national ministry is also charged with responsibilities for sport and recreation and for cultural affairs.[6]

Policy and program implementation and related matters reside with the other 14 departments of education. In general terms, each department of education regulates its "own affairs," that is, those pertaining to its own population group. The House of Assembly (under the Parliament) is responsible for the Department of Education and Culture (DEC) for Whites which is further divided into four provincial departments (Transvaal, Cape Providence, Orange Free State, and Natal).[7] Recent legislative changes permit parents to determine (if they so desire) whether local sites would become Model A, B, or C schools. These legislative provisions are designed to enable Whites to control their own affairs via local decisions. Model A schools will become private institutes and can continue to restrict admission policies. Model B schools will remain state-funded institutions; and they can establish nonracial admission criteria. Model C schools will become

state-assisted sites enabling them to receive public funds for staff salaries, but not for other expenditures. Hence, their admission criteria can remain restrictive.[8] In essence, the administrative and governance structures for White education allows local decision-making either to maintain the status quo or to be innovative on nonracial matters.

The House of Representatives (within Parliament) is responsible for the Department of Education and Culture (DEC) for Coloureds; the House of Delegates (in Parliament) is responsible for the Department of Education and Culture (Indians). The Department of Education and Training (which is not represented by a House in Parliament) is responsible for African education, except in the self-governing and independent territories. Self-governing territories ostensibly have considerable political autonomy, although they are still part of the Republic of South Africa. Six departments of education are in Gazankulu, KaNgwane, KwaZulu, KwaNdebele, Qwaqwa, and Lebowa. Four departments are in the so-called independent states of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei.[9]

There is duplication of management and administrative structures and functions within the 14 departments. This duplication, however, does not mask the facts that expenditures for Whites are four times greater than for Blacks. For Indians it is 3 to 1; and for Coloureds it is 2-and-one-half or 3 to 1. Black schools in urban areas receive about twice the expenditures of Blacks in self-governing territories and so-called independent states. With reference to pupil-teacher ratios, the following are noted: Whites 17:1; Indians 21:1; Coloureds 23:1; Blacks (urban areas) 36:1; and Black self-governing 41:1.[10] In short, apartheid structures and policies solidified disparities among demographic groups.

Case Studies at Local Schools

Alton Primary School

Recently 93 percent of the parents of children attending Alton Primary voted for it to become a Model B school so children of various races could attend. While the principal and an overwhelming number of parents made this decision to remain a state-funded school, there was considerable debate about the development of criteria for admitting students who had not previously attended the school. Hence, criteria for other race students attending Alton include the following: (1) Proficiency in English must be demonstrated via written and oral examinations, if English was not the previous medium of instruction; (2) Students must be within two years of age of the normal age for the particular standard; (3) The student's academic ability must be such that he or she can "cope" with school requirements particularly in mathematics; and (4) Students must live in the area and there must be classroom space to accommodate the student. As a result of these criteria, about

10 percent of the 575 student body (Grade one to Standard V) are from races other than White.

Although Alton became a Model B school, most structural arrangements and teaching practices remained intact. The 23 member teaching staff consists of 18 women and five men. The principal is assisted by a deputy principal who is responsible for orientation and induction of new staff, staff development, and liaison between teachers and the principal. Three department heads report to the principal and informally to the deputy principal on their areas of responsibility. Two of the department heads focus on junior primary (the first four years of school) and the third focuses on senior primary (the last four years).

The male principal appeared to relegate considerable autonomy to the three female administrators on daily operations while his request was to remain apprised of any major developments. Interactions with the School Management Council (somewhat analogous to the locally elected American school board) and the suburban community **and** involvement with student teachers from a nearby college of education are his ongoing concerns. He asserted that the School Management Council has modest input on academic matters. Helping to establish school fees and determining their use, choosing school uniforms, and engaging in some local fund-raising activities are the Council's foci.

According to the principal and several teachers, an effective school is evident at Alton. The indicators of effectiveness are observed via sound communication and team building to establish and maintain staff morale; most children achieve at grade level; most students attend secondary schools and later pass the matriculation examination taken at the end of secondary school; relatively minor problems associated with integration need addressing; and good working relations exist with the Management Council and the community. An observance of quality school facilities, ample textbooks and instructional material, and interactive classroom management also appeared to suggest school effectiveness.

When asked if staff from various races taught at Alton, the reply was a quick "no." According to the principal, "Black and Indian staff are not here because there are serious reservations about their ability to communicate effectively in English." This same concern was voiced regarding the English usage of some native White Afrikaan speakers who are also not familiar with the nuances of English. Coloured teachers were not mentioned; many are indigenous English speakers and the failure to include them on the staff is still based on racial exclusion. Although matriculants from various races attend the nearby college of education, the principal declared that non-white student teachers would not be assigned at Alton during a transitional period. He also asserted that after his retirement within three or four years, the transitional period might end. When asked if the school might be receptive to international student teachers from the United States (including African Americans) or England, the principal replied positively. Certainly, there are different usages of English among South Africans, Americans, and English which he is

apparently willing to overlook. The criteria regarding English language usage is a substitute for racial exclusion of indigenous South Africans who are not White.

Brown Primary School

Located on undulating scenic hills in a working-class area of a large city, Brown Elementary School has 603 pupils with over 85 percent being Coloured and the rest Africans and Indians. African students are bused from other areas so they can attend a school that provides better facilities and instruction than what is available in their neighborhood. The principal and senior teachers also stated that interactions between Coloureds and Africans would be a positive experience for students. Ranging from five to 16 years old, pupils attend pre-primary (what would be kindergarten in the United States), primary, and special education classes. The principal, deputy principal, two primary-head/lead teachers, and an infant-lead teacher serve in administrative and/or key advisory roles.

Although the physical facilities are not comparable to middle-class White schools due to huge discrepancies in fiscal resources, it was quickly apparent that staff enthusiasm was comparable to that observed in several White schools. Brown teachers make extra efforts to produce their own instructional and teaching aids, so it was somewhat surprising to see material comparable to that observed in some middle-class White schools. Of particular note were the games designed by a special-education teacher to stimulate responsiveness on the part of 14, 15, and 16 years olds who would soon leave school but were not likely to pursue any additional education or training. She was quite concerned that her special students would have extreme difficulty coping in the larger society.

In addition to eagerness to teach on the part of many classroom teachers, staff morale seemed positive due to the legacy of the former woman principal, who was highly respected. The current male principal, who stated that he was really "acting," seemed fairly non-communicative and unaware of fundamental school matters. When asked fundamental questions about Brown, he basically did not respond. His leadership skills appeared quite limited. He stated several times that resuming his former position as a department head was his goal. The deputy principal (who was responsive to several questions and is active in the local professional teacher organization) and two of the lead teachers are also male. In fact, three of the four men in the 25 member teaching staff are in "administrative" roles.

Several women teachers contend that the men are in their current administrative positions simply because they are males. According to several senior women, the principal requests that female teachers assume tasks which are normally administrative responsibilities such as liaisons with parents and interacting with the Parent-Teacher-Association on special fund-raising projects. Yet, these same females would not be seriously considered for the permanent principalship of Brown because men are not keen on working with another woman principal. Based

upon initial observations and discussions, some senior women certainly appeared capable of becoming successful principals. Their absence in the principalship appeared to limit effective schooling.

Carey Primary School

A principal and two head teachers (one man and one woman) are administratively responsible for the 404 students from pre-primary to Standard V (that is, eight years of education) at Carey Primary School. Since 1986, Carey (originally designed for Indian children) has accepted African students who now comprise just over 10 percent of the student population. Initial resistance was apparently strong from the Indian community about the registration of "The Blacks" who lived in other parts of the metropolitan area. But Black registration and attendance were encouraged through the principal's initiative, informing African staff in a nearby hospital that their children could attend the school. In every classroom, except one, African students are present. Comments were voiced and questions raised about the Coloured children. The principal seemed somewhat surprised about this writer's comments and questions about the Coloured children, since Coloureds have attended this school for a considerable time. "That's just the way it's been," was the essence of his reply. For all students, no lingering problems seem to exist among the demographic groups.

The principal stated several times that his school was under-financed due to different funding formulas for the DEC (House of Assembly) and the DEC (House of Delegates). In addition, the principal believed that his outspokenness and political stances about inequities affecting Indians and Coloureds resulted in a lack of textbooks and teaching materials from the DEC (House of Delegates). Thus, Carey does not receive funding comparable to some Indian schools. The absence of ample teaching materials and textbooks certainly appeared to support his statements about insufficient funds to address educational needs in regular, remedial, and special education classes.

The principal's soft-spoken and congenial leadership style and his interactions with an Indian college of education seemed to lessen, on the surface, problems associated with insufficient funds. According to the principal, virtually all students in regular classes complete primary education and about 90 percent pass the secondary school matriculation examination. Discussions with the principal and some of the 20 staff (15 are women and five are men) appeared to indicate that good professional relationships exist within the school. Fairly limited staff participation occurs with the Parent-Teacher-Association because the DEC has been too prescriptive regarding the role of the PTA.

Kwadori Primary School

Situated in a semi-rural area about 30 kilometers from a large city, Kwadori

Primary School has over 1,300 students and one administrator--the principal who has served as an administrator since 1978. This school includes SubStandard A to Standard Six (eight years of schooling) with students ranging from six to 20 years of age. The 21 member teaching staff is almost equally divided between women and men. Although a chief education inspector of this self-governing territory stated that Kwadori is a "model" school with the best quality education in the area, its physical appearance was a far cry from the White and Indian schools which had been observed. The only consistent teaching aids were the blackboards and chalk.

In discussions with select staff, their keen interest in assisting pupils emerged. The pupils appeared enthusiastic because this was a "safe" school which had been relatively unaffected by fighting in the immediate vicinity between INKATHA and the African National Congress (ANC), the main political parties in that self-governing territory. (These parties are in contention for political control, especially as it will relate to a post-apartheid era.) For some unknown reason, there seems to be an informal understanding that scrimmages would not be fought close to the school. In fact, students from surrounding areas sometimes appear temporarily at Kwadori to escape the fighting. Nevertheless, students are affected by the political fighting, as seen in their absenteeism when they are forced to flee their homes and stay with relatives or reside temporarily in White areas which are unaffected by the political fights.

To talk of administrative structures and management is to observe the perspective and role of the principal. His major objective is to continue maintaining quality education and the "model" atmosphere where students consistently achieve the best primary examination results in the area and to have select students become finalists in national academic competitions. For example, in 1990, one student placed second nationally in mathematics. Still other students win trophies in various sports. His other objectives include assisting an exemplary teaching staff (all are graduates of teacher training colleges; some have pursued post-college studies in other nations) and attempting to maintain a working relationship with the nine-member Parent Association. The Association is relatively inactive due to political scrimmages and disturbances which preclude night meetings, the time when parents are likely to be available for meetings and consultations. If his objectives are achieved, along with disciplined students, the principal asserts that he will be maintaining an effective school.

Mzabu Primary Shack School

In June 1991, Mzabu Primary opened its doors as a shack school to over 300 students in Standards III, IV, and V (the last three years of primary school). Eight teachers, which includes a man who acts as the deputy principal, attempt to address the educational needs of children who live in nearby shacks and in rural areas over 10 kilometers away--a distance walked by over one-quarter of the students. The school buildings, constructed from pre-fabricated materials, have no electricity;

one water tap is located near the outdoor toilets for the girls and women teachers. While these problems are daunting enough, the school's location in a "war-zone" between INKATHA and ANC supporters presents overwhelming problems. Teachers and students are regularly stopped by "soldiers" as they attempt to travel to school, thus often arriving over an hour late. Many male students are regularly required to participate in military camp activities by their parents (who want their homes to be safe) and by "military leaders" (who want to maintain and enhance their strength). Female students who are forced to participate in military camps are often abused. Six were pregnant in the fall of 1991, resulting from sexual abuse in the camps. Tiny five and six year old students from a nearby junior primary school (the first three years of school) are transferred to Mzabu because extensive fighting makes it unsafe for their school to remain open.

The teachers state that they have very little, if any, contact with parents. A few parents are met as they enroll their children. Parent conferences and Parent-Teacher Association activities are nil since most parents work constantly, and/or they find it too unsafe to visit the school in late afternoon or early evening. When asked if any teachers aspired to administrative positions, they quickly responded negatively, due to nonexistent resources and the massive problems which schools in the area face.

Essentially, this school is concerned with survival and coping mechanisms; students are often the victims of social and psychological trauma. Some students simply "disappear," since their one-room tin shacks are quickly disassembled as parents are forced to move for economic and security reasons. There are charts in the school entitled, "Look and Save a Life." The charts depict hand grenades, molotov cocktails, guns, and similar armaments. Hence, teaching and learning often become secondary concerns, so symbols of effective schools are completely absent.

Tswelelo Lower Primary School

In the midst of South Africa's largest African township sits Tswelelo Lower Primary School. When entering the grounds, an immediate thought is, "this is an oasis" in a desert of poverty. Well-manicured lawns and flower gardens are located outside the principal's office and along the perimeters of the campus. Teaching aids, books, and plants provide the decor for the principal's immaculate office. (These examples of apparent wealth imply DET funding; external donations and resource management made this possible). The principal's educational concerns for the 600-plus students in pre-primary to Standard II (the first four years of school) and the 17 women teaching staff are the focus of her entire discussions.

At the current time, the school is part of an innovative teaching and curriculum project funded by a non-government organization (NGO). Innovative curriculum for English and social sciences are integral components of teachers' pedagogical methods. To help Tswelelo teachers enhance their teaching skills and develop

potential administrative competencies, the principal convened several curriculum workshops at Tswelelo and requested that her teaching staff conduct several sessions. The principal's educational perspective is that both teachers and students should learn and enhance their skills.

Since the principal is also a regional chair for the major curriculum project, she has contact with professionals and organizations engaged in various creative instructional and fund-raising projects. For example, by working with an NGO, she obtained a grant from a large department store in the immediate metropolitan area to purchase textbooks. Therefore, parents paid very modest fees for textbooks for their children during that school year. The principal also informed the local Management Council (appointed by the DET instead of an elected one as in White schools) and the PTA of this donation so local fund raising could be directed to other efforts.

In anticipation of future educational challenges produced by desegregation, the principal privately hired two White teachers (in 1989) to teach English. Her 20-plus years of experience suggested that Tswelelo students and teachers should interact with Whites as teachers and as peers. The presence of Whites provided an avenue for African and White teachers to relate as equals.

While there are many positive features of this school, the principal and the two department heads must confront problems due to a transient student body and the lack of adequate fiscal resources. For example, the principal, assisted by the department heads and the teachers, must make concerted efforts to accommodate the learning needs of many students who enter in the middle of the year and others who stay only a few months and leave. The principal's view is "we must do all we can while they [students] are here...some of whom do not enter school until they are nine." Due to transience and the lack of educational readiness of many Tswelelo students, an experimental project in English readiness for Grade "O" is underway for five-year-olds who would not otherwise be in school. In this program, six weeks are spent teaching English readiness and another six weeks repeating lessons as needed to help students move to the next level. The aim is to expose preschoolers to English before Substandard A, where English is taught as a class.

Although external funds have been donated for school projects, the severe lack of fiscal resources has meant that the principal and some teachers use their personal monies to purchase teaching materials. Teachers' time is spent constructing material which could be used in class preparation and/or in direct instruction. And while parents are eager to send their children to this model school, their meager resources prevent them from contributing more than the equivalent of a few American dollars each year for school fees and materials. Hence, the children are still short-changed in several components of effective schooling.

Challenges to the Local Schools

While the preceding discussion highlighted the conditions which administrators face in local schools, numerous interviews and site observations provided additional data. Some of the more prominent features included: (1) the effect of political conditions on administrative and school practices; (2) the problems associated with the integration of schools; (3) the absence of adequate resources and provisions; (4) the presence of incompetent principals when competent professionals are available; (5) the lack of preparation before assuming the principalship; and (6) the inability of students to participate in effective schools largely stemming from the preceding factors.

Political Conditions

The political conditions influencing Mzabu Primary Shack School highlight the extremely harsh effect of "war" on the ability of principals and students to participate in substantive educational activities. Survival is often the paramount concern at Mzabu and for many other schools in that area. Although students may be physically present in such schools, teachers and others comment about students' inabilities to concentrate mentally or their limited attention span. If their concentration is relatively intact, the curtailed school hours still preclude a full day of teaching and learning.

In other cases, while actual "war" is not being waged, demonstrations and strikes limit schooling. There are numerous examples, particularly since 1976, where schools have been closed, principals forced to leave, and teachers prevented from teaching. A recent prominent example occurred in Mamelodi township near Pretoria. In various incidents, violence resulted in principals and teachers being physically attacked in schools; their cars and houses were burned; and they were constantly intimidated by students. Why? Principals and teachers are often perceived as the "symbols and agents" of the state and its resulting oppressive apartheid measures. So, principals, in particular, are attacked and intimidated.

In still other cases, political pressure from parents (in response to DEC and DET policies) impinge upon the principal's role. Several educators stated that the development and implementation of admission (and retention) criteria for Model B schools required a complacent principal or one who is quite politically astute. For practical reasons such as preventing the closing of a neighborhood school, White parents opt for a Model B school which will remain a state-financed site. However, the criteria for matriculating at the school often prevents African children from entering; or, they enter in small numbers. The principal may assume a complacent role if he or she is opposed to integration. Or, if the principal supports the practice of a nonracial student body, his or her astuteness is necessary to have local Management Councils develop flexible admission criteria whether in a White school or an Indian School such as Alton and Carey.

Integration of Schools

For principals in whichever setting, the administrative responsibilities of an integrated student body are still present. Several interviewees stated rather naively that no major problems occurred or would occur from integration. In fact, a White Minister of Education stated that school mixing is "working like a dream." To integrate properly, however, very deliberate administrative actions must be taken regarding students' learning needs, teachers' and administrators' ability to communicate with a variety of students, rapport and interactions among students **and** teachers, and the presence of a nonracial professional staff. For example, at Alton Primary School students must be within two years of age of the normal age for that particular standard. Several African children were unable to remain at Alton because they did not meet this criteria. The administrative issue is to ascertain what kind of developmental and support mechanisms could help students achieve at the "normal" level. Many principals may be unaware or unwilling to assist teachers in meeting the variety of student learning needs. And even with the best of intentions, principals and staff may simply need assistance from DEC or DET managers, who may also be ill-prepared to deal with nonracial student needs. In short, the presence of a nonracial student body requires support and stimulation from various parts of the administrative system.

Lack of Resources and Provisions

The deteriorating physical conditions or inadequate classroom facilities at Brown, Carey, Kwadori, and Mzabu portray the lack of adequate financial resources at Coloured, Indian, rural, and shack schools. At Brown and Tswelelo, as stated earlier, the teachers made special efforts to construct teaching and learning materials since finances were not provided. (This is reminiscent of the conditions of African-American schools during the 1940s and 1950s, when vast financial discrepancies existed between them and European-American schools.) In the case of the other schools, teachers did not make instructional aids; thus, students were deprived of such visual stimuli, although principals and staff were making the best use of the limited textbooks and materials.

Perhaps talented students might be able to grasp various ideas with inadequate resources; however, for those with "average" ability or special learning needs, the lack of financial resources for materials and other stimuli is an acute problem. At Brown, for example, despite the tremendous efforts of three special education teachers, the students were not developing skills which would enable them to be self-sufficient adults. One special-education teacher stated that she would like to expose her students to a variety of learning and vocational opportunities. Instead, this was virtually impossible because insufficient funds are allocated to Coloured schools for special needs. In most African and rural schools, there are virtually no provisions for students with special learning needs.

Incompetent Administrators

The absence of criteria and mechanisms to ensure that competent professionals, regardless of sex, occupy administrative positions was quite noticeable, especially as observed at Brown School. At this site and throughout the nation, particularly in senior primary and secondary schools, women are barely represented in principalships despite their skills and competencies. Instead, teachers and students must "muddle through" due to formal and informal norms which place incompetent men from a variety of demographic backgrounds in administrative roles. Redress at the local level must seriously include gender representation.

In numerous discussions with principals and other administrators, only one stated that he felt qualified administratively when he assumed the principalship. This principal taught several years in public schools before spending 10 years on the faculty of a college of education where he taught, supervised student teachers, and assisted senior college administrators. He then became a principal; certainly not a typical route. At Indian and Coloured schools, principals often serve as a deputy principal or department head or lead teacher before assuming the principalship. At African schools in urban areas, this was also a fairly common practice until the mid- to late-1970s, when principals were thrust into their roles because political demonstrations in protest of apartheid and resulting activities forced their predecessors to resign. In many rural and shack schools, teachers are literally thrust into principalships.

Lack of Preparation

In the majority of cases, principals have no formal training in budgeting, planning, instructional leadership, staff development, or similar administrative functions. Until quite recently, most English-speaking colleges of education and universities did not offer diplomas or degrees in administration or management. Such colleges often viewed courses in management as mechanisms to support apartheid, since principals and other administrators were often functionaries who implemented segregationist policies. Afrikaan universities offered some degrees and courses in administration which were not available to Africans, Indians, and Coloureds. Hence, if potential or current administrators desired courses or practicums to develop administrative competencies, few were available.

Added to the daily logistics of educational management for ill-prepared principals are the multiple issues that surface in dealing with a nonracial student body. As mentioned in reference to Carey and similar sites, even principals with commitments to integration encounter substantial administrative and transitional problems that appear in schools undergoing desegregation. Consequently, seasoned administrators have new roles and challenges confronting them; and there is tremendous variability among the roles principals must assume at different times.

Absence of Effective Schools

In discussing an effective school, one principal stated the following:

> How the principal perceives his or her role is crucial. I see myself in a positive "parental" role for students and teachers. The principal is a teacher-upgrader, and does this in a non-threating way. She must help develop common purposes in schools. The principal works for students and staff.[11]

A second educator stated that an effective school is one where "learning is occurring in a non-authoritarian environment. The students and teachers are happy to be there. And the principal sets up an environment where teachers have professional support."[12] And, a third educator stated that an effective school could be gauged by the amount of student learning (particularly with respect to students from disadvantaged backgrounds), the examination results, the atmosphere in the schools, the relationship between staff and students, the ability of the students and staff to arrive on time and spend a complete day in school, and quality relations between the school and community. Maintaining the appropriate blend of discipline and respect for the school's authority in light of external political pressure is part of an effective school. All concur that the principal plays a pivotal role in the effective school.

While such views are voiced, several educators stated and school site observations indicated that it is very difficult to establish and maintain effective schools in view of apartheid policies or the remnants thereof in the DNE, DECs, and DET. Regional and department requirements, coupled with the several constraints discussed in the preceding paragraphs, often mean that students are not the beneficiaries of administrative structures, policies, and roles that enable them to learn and teachers to instruct successfully.

Toward New Administrative Roles and Policies

Several policy researchers, former executives in the DET and DECs, officials at the Urban Foundation and South African Institute of Race Relations, and African political leaders do not believe that issues of comprehensive school administration can be addressed completely by educators. Instead, the constitutional and legal process must come into play so the proper balance between central/national and decentralized/local administrative structures and functions will become a reality in a unitary system. As one stated,

> A change in the Constitution is necessary to change the racial structure of schools. This can only occur after substantive negotiations. To change the structure of education before this process is to move prematurely. It will then be necessary to introduce legislative and administrative requirements to alter the racial basis.[13]

Despite the crucial significance of this quote and its ramifications, new roles and responsibilities for principals and other administrators must be envisioned to begin addressing immediate schools problems, preparing for a transition period, and devising long-range policies for the post-apartheid period. Working with students, teachers, and professionals from various demographic backgrounds will immediately be a new administrative role. As one principal stated, "After four decades of stringent apartheid, principals and teachers are uncomfortable with changes, with transformation. If administrators are uncomfortable...teachers [will be also]."[14] A new task for principals will be that of harmonizing. Building the confidence of teachers to work with diverse students and teachers would be part of the administrator's repertoire.

Equally noticeable will be the necessity for the development of cooperative leadership roles via delegation of responsibilities to staff. Principals will need to assume the roles of advisors, that is, to assist teachers and to negotiate changes. This new role is advocated by several professional teacher organizations.[15]

For administrators from all demographic backgrounds, but especially Whites, some transfers to rural schools or to those with large African student bodies will be necessary. Functioning effectively in a different milieu will be a new role that may be enhanced by incentives. A former Secretary of Education for a self-governing territory asserts that administrative expertise may be distributed by incentives to administrators for working in rural areas. Ensuring that administrative expertise is transferred to rural or African professionals who will remain in the locale would be a new role for White administrators.

For many White administrators, especially those from the DECs or DET, it will likely be difficult to assume a staff role in relation to African and Coloured senior administrators. And, for some men, it will also be troublesome to work with women supervisors. Such new conditions necessitate practical measures.

A former secretary of education from a self-governing territory asserts that policies for "organizational development and training are necessary"[16] if managers and administrators are to function effectively in a unitary system. Without comprehensive organizational development, individual managers will simply continue to function in their usual fashion. Organizational development could be undertaken in several ways.[17] One component could involve the identification of administrators who will immediately be interacting with professionals and students from various demographic backgrounds. A second component would be to identify administrators within a catchment area of schools located in a particular region or district. A third component would be to have women and underrepresented groups participate and prepare for administrative positions as a means of redress. The overall purposes of organizational development could include creating and maintaining effective communication, working with teachers and students from different backgrounds, developing an esprit de corps, resolving crises via dialogue and negotiation, and understanding and developing a range of practical adminis-

trative skills such as planning, budgeting, evaluating, and delegating. A culture of management, in short, would be the immediate goal that could then contribute to cultures of teaching and learning.

If educational apartheid is to be dismantled, concrete innovative policies and practices must be initiated--rather than the perpetuation of ingenious methods of stagnation which characterize the legislative and educational policies of the White South African government. This necessitates the clear recognition for a constitutional change leading to a new government with a unitary system of education with equal provision for all students. In the interim and during a transitional period, local school administrators and structures can play pivotal roles in moving toward effective schooling in a post-apartheid period.

Notes

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8. Monica Bot. *The Blackboard Debate: Hurdles, Options, and Opportunities in School Integration*. Johannesburg, South Africa: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1991, pp. v-150.
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10. *Ibid.*, p. 47; Randall Robinson, "We Lost--and de Klerk Won," *Newsweek*, July 29, 1991, p. 8.
11. Interview comments by Principal of Tsewelo Lower Primary School, South Africa, November 1991.
12. Interview comments by Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, October 1991.
13. Interview comments by a Senior Executive with the South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, South Africa, November 1991.

14. Interview comments by a Senior Administrator with Sacred Heart College, Johannesburg, South Africa, October 1991.
15. Neville E. Alexander. "Restoring the Status of Teachers in the Community," *The Organizer: Official Publication of the Society of Natal Teachers*. Vol. 5, No. 2, September 1991, pp. 9-12.
16. Interview comments by Senior Executive and Policy Researcher with the Urban Foundation, Johannesburg, South Africa, October 1991.
17. Although African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans are the numerical minority in the United States, in contrast to South Africa, nevertheless some organizational development and transitional mechanisms may be learned from American desegregation. For example, the American Desegregation Assistance Centers could be applicable. These centers were funded by the U. S. Department of Education (and often placed in universities or other educational organizations) to help states and school districts address desegregation from the 1960s to the present. American federally funded educational laboratories such as Far West Laboratory in California or Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in Texas (where three or four major ethnic or racial groups experienced school desegregation) conducted applied research and assisted educational systems with training and development as desegregation was initiated and as follow-up problems emerged. See: Al King. *A Handbook for Inservice Education: Guidelines for Training, Multicultural Education and Desegregation*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, November 1982, pp. 9-103; Charles B. Vergon. "The Evaluation of the School Desegregation Movement and Its Implications for Equity and Excellence," in *Equity and Excellence in Education: A Reassessment*. David G. Carter, Sr. (editor). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, Center for Urban and Multicultural Education, 1989, pp. 11-27.

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91

Institutional Inertia to Achieving Diversity: Transforming Resistance into Celebration

By Nancy P. Greenman, Ellen B. Kimmel, Helen M. Bannan, and Blanche Radford-Curry

Nancy P. Greenman and Ellen B. Kimmel are professors in the Department of Psychological and Social Foundations, College of Education, University of South Florida, Tampa; Helen M. Bannan is a professor in the College of Education, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton; and Blanche Radford-Curry is a professor in the Department of Education, Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Florida. *This paper evolved from a presentation by the authors at the 1990 meetings of the American Educational Studies Association in Orlando, Florida.*

> The task is not only to analyze the structural conditions by which inequity is reproduced in society but to search out every possible site in which the struggle for progressive transformation can take place.
> --Frederick Erickson (1987, p. 352)

Introduction

Since the early nineteen-sixties, educational reformers and political activists have pressed to open educational opportunities to previously denied groups, including, but not limited to, girls and women, Blacks/African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, physically challenged,

92

and newly immigrated groups. Despite legislation, government- and privately-funded change efforts, inservice education, curricular integration projects, and restructuring attempts, educational institutions remain remarkably the same. The fabric of this institutional inertia, we contend, is the inextricable linkage between individuals as culturally constructed beings and the institutions they collectively create and perpetuate. The focus of this paper, then, is articulation of multi-level, interdisciplinary perspectives on the problem of resistance to diversity as it is manifested in some institutions of higher education. We explore the nature of the mutually reinforcing dynamic between individuals and institutions in perpetuating existing structures. Finally, in response to Erickson's (1987) exhortation, we offer a pathway for transforming resistance into celebration of diversity by identifying some sites where change can occur.

Perspectives on the Problem

Where do we look to address institutional inertia? How do we pin down the inanimate structures? We think of institutions as concrete, even if they are neither literally nor figuratively so, but rather made of less substantial stuff. We track institutions through the expectations for behavior and the organized patterns of behavior of individuals. After all, institutions do not behave, the people who create and inhabit them do.

Structural Barriers To Diversity

Institutions are created within the boundaries of socially constructed realities and are woven with the fabric of these realities. What people consider the logical way to do things, or the most valued or efficient way to solve problems, or what is considered common sense, is so **within** this reality or from the perspective of the cultural world view. As Harkins (1976) succinctly put it, "Humans are the product of culture; culture is the product of humans" (p. 213). This world view is so pervasive and so elusive and so intertwined with every aspect of a culture that talking about it is extremely difficult. In fact, the need to do so is not perceived, as the assumption prevails that everyone who is not "mad or bad" accepts the same reality or truth (Watzlawick, 1976). Assumptions may be as basic as the value of the formalization of language (Menyuk and Menyuk, 1988) or the value of research (Suina, 1992). We are not simply speaking of ethnic, "racial," and gender difference here, but rather all aspects of cultural diversity. Sir Alfred North Whitehead described a "...general form of a form of thought; and, like the air we breathe, such a form is so translucent, and so pervading, and so seemingly necessary, that only by extreme effort can we become aware of it," (Whitehead in Michael S. Gregory, 1980, p. 300). This description aptly defines the concept of world view. Elusive though the world view may be, it is incumbent upon us to identify the prevailing assumptions in order to question, expand, or modify them

to encourage new forms of thinking, inquiring, and behaving. It is these assumptions that shape meaning, prescribe and reinforce behavior, and allow people to accept patterns and structures as appropriate and inevitable--even when they conflict with rhetoric for change. Thus, institutions appear to be unyielding behemoths.

The prevailing American world view is supported by particular "scientific" principles. Part of the Western societal world view, influenced by Greek philosophy and concretized in the nineteenth century, is that reality be validated by science. Thus, the Cartesian-Newtonian paradigm--belief in a fixed universe, stasis, equilibrium, matter as the essence of the universe, duality, reductionism, segmentation, deductive logic, linearity, and two-valued causality--provides the parameters for this world view.

This translates into the way the school year and school day are divided, the reduction of knowledge into facts, facts into subjects, subjects into courses, courses into units, units into lessons, and lessons into objectives (Bennett & LeCompte, 1990). It saturates every aspect of both the overt and hidden curricula, from preschool through higher education--even the very form of school buildings. It allows and encourages us to view differences as negative and separate--not part of the reality.

While we readily acknowledge manifestations of the industrial model of standardization in public schooling, we are less apt to recognize the same rigid foundations at the university level. The conscious transformation, in the late nineteenth century, of American universities to the hierarchical German model, and the similarity of the structures inherent in such a model and in the uniform corporate model which evolved contemporaneously is not as readily discussed. Worse, we have not exposed such structures for their irrelevancy to a viable learning/research institution that would seek to reflect and embody the realities of diverse groups.

In an effort to reveal the operation of some structural barriers to cultural diversity, open-ended "ethnographic" interviews were conducted with 15 faculty of several southern universities (Greenman, 1990-91). Analysis of the data revealed the following:

1. Reward structures often do not reflect public rhetoric of diversity. Faculty reported that those who collaborate outside of their narrowly defined specialty often are "given a nod for the effort," but told that it does not really count toward tenure and promotion. For example, a marketing professor reported that her African-American-related research brought compliments from her colleagues, but she was told that, if she wanted tenure, she had better focus on her "area." Another professor reported that he was told that if he wanted tenure, he had to be the single author of his manuscripts.

2. Faculty who engage in long-term qualitative studies reported feeling very vulnerable; they observed that existing structures informed by cultural assump-

tions about "truth," "science," and "research," support brief statistical studies. As one professor stated, "I was hired partially **because** I do qualitative research, but I have been reprimanded for not having 'concrete data' and for not producing a quantity of publications." Another professor stated, "I have been told that I am not doing any research, when I've just completed and read the galleys for a book on a nine-year study."

3. Faculty reported feeling the need for "qualitative research groups" for "mutual support and help in negotiating an unfriendly system" and "to establish credibility in a positivistic research structure." One professor stated, "Empiricism is so narrowly defined. What **is** empirical research, anyway? If it is experiential, and involves the senses, then how can the participant-observation of qualitative research not be included?" Many reported discomfort with the fact that quantitative and qualitative research are viewed as polar opposites (see Howe and Eisenhart, 1990; Smith, 1983). They noted that, apparently, methodology becomes an end in itself--rather than an emergent, in Thelma McCormack's (1989) words, "constructed knowing wherein the two voices--emic and etic/subjective and objective are integrated...[where]...Authors may be passionate about formal knowledge and analytic about one's personal life" (p. 23).

4. Faculty, especially those from colleges of education, reported an apparent lack of congruence between the intended student outcome and the instructional design and evaluation used. In the words of one professor, "We profess the need for experiential learning, critical thinking, portfolio evaluation, sensitivity to diversity, and emergent teaching, but classrooms abound in didactic lecture and multiple choice exams; when we venture forth to practice what we preach, we are often punished for it."

5. Faculty reported that the faculty evaluation procedure structures do not allow for creativity or diversity of style. One professor in a college of education explained, "Students who are naive of the subject matter are the source of evaluations of the professors' pedagogical knowledge base--which is the subject matter expertise. If the professor models good teaching congruent with a new knowledge base, like emergent teaching, she--or he--is evaluated by students who use their own experience, or old knowledge base, for a criterion. It's like, if I were a biology professor, and taught the students all about cells, and then they evaluated me on whether or not I was being the best cell I possibly could."

6. Faculty reported that systems for accounting of human resources, FTE's, create structural barriers to effective use of expertise and resources in support of inter- or transdisciplinary efforts. Faculty who reported that they **do** interdisciplinary teaching and other projects reported that they do so "in spite of" the existing structures. "We can usually find ways around the structures, but it would really be nice if we didn't have to expend our energy in that way, and could instead just focus on the collaboration."

7. Faculty gave accounts of administration "shaping program through

implicit, often inappropriate criteria." One professor who was brought in on funded research "to develop an innovative emergent curriculum" recounted that she was "instructed to package the curriculum," told that it "could only be used on the graduate level because the undergraduates needed prescribed, not evolving, pedagogy and information." She related the following: "The physical space in which collaboration was fostered for all staff and faculty levels was dismantled for segregated office space because the interaction was interpreted as 'too much socializing.' They probably thought they were doing us a favor--giving us private offices, even after we explained our intent--but it effectively dampered the collaborative effort."

8. Faculty reported that "racism and cultural diversity are addressed as isolated personal problems, rather than structural ones." One professor in particular reported continually raising the issues of structural barriers to diversity, but was always told to see her supervisor about her "personal problems." As one professor indicated, "The conventional wisdom underlying the system involves assumptions that are part of the cultural hegemony of established classes in society."

9. Faculty reported that complex issues, such as affirmative action, "are reduced to simplistic problem-solving continua."

10. Faculty reported that, as one professor stated, "Although official rhetoric is supportive, cultural diversity and multicultural education are criticized as the antithesis of democracy and the issues are trivialized by invocations of 'politically correct' agendas." Several professors described misinformed public outcry against multicultural education and cultural pluralism citing "compromise of quality" and "dissolution of truth" as "inevitable consequences of multiculturalism."

Obviously, diversity is broadly defined within these themes. They describe faculty's assessment of barriers to **any** form of diversity, the structures that encourage and support uniformity and sameness of being, thinking and doing throughout the university.

A look at professor-student interactions in university classrooms and the way classes are structured provides more insight into the way individual behaviors reinforce the "cultural hegemony" in resistance to diversity.

Invisibility and Silence in the Classroom

Though discourse about contemporary education acknowledges diversity and multiculturalism, the roar of the mainstream is still the voice heard in classrooms--in curricula, text, expectations, and behavior. Culturally different groups are far less audible and visible. As Thorne (1989) described:

> Invisibility and silence are characteristic experiences of subordinated groups, especially in settings created and controlled by those with structural power. Of course, all groups have lively,

> talking occasions. But in dominant settings, like universities, where white, class-privileged men and their subcultures prevail, those not of the entitled categories may experience a particular kind of silence, infused with feelings of not being quite at home, of anxiety, of self doubt. (p. 313)

A history of curricula of exclusion has contributed greatly to this invisibility and silence. The fact that "...women of all social classes, ethnicities, and sexualities, and minority, working class, and gay men are to a great extent absent from traditional bodies of knowledge" (Thorne, 1989, p. 311) does not support multivocality. Thorne suggested that the existence of distortions and gaps in what we teach raises two questions: (1) What are the effects on those people whose lives and histories have been, and may still be, distorted or enveloped in silence?; and (2) What are the effects of the invisibility and silence of non-dominant groups on the privileged, the Euro-American, the heterosexual, the class-privileged, the men and boys whose experiences have been inflated as universal knowledge?

In response to Thorne's first question, the following anecdotes from Moses' (1989) research may provide some illumination on the classroom experiences of women of color. The data were collected from African American women at various colleges and universities. Their statements represent typical realities of the intersection of race and gender in student-faculty relations. Six themes appear most evident in these students' perceptions: (1) professors' limited expectations, due to race/gender; (2) professors' exclusion of gender/race issues from the curriculum; (3) stereotyping; (4) the implicit assumption that each student speaks for all African Americans and/or women; (5) the double estrangement from being both African American and female; and (6) failure to differentiate among Blacks. The silence and invisibility echo in these students' words:

> * My professor in biology did not know how to treat me. He seemed surprised when I told him I wanted to be a doctor.
> * My teachers, all but one, don't know how to treat me. They are always slightly surprised when I ask a probing or thoughtful question.
> * I have this older Black male professor who does not want to listen to me when I raise gender issues in class. It really upsets me because the majority of students in the class are female.
> * I was surprised to find that this professor who was really in tune to most issues...became hostile when I told her that her generalizations about Blacks were not true.
> * On the days I know they are going to talk about Black issues, I don't go because I know she is going to call on, me and it makes me uncomfortable.
> * It really upsets me that many times I know the answer, but my teacher will call on me to answer only questions about Black

issues or Black women's issues, but not general issues.

* As an older graduate student and frequently the only minority student, I sometimes feel that my comments and opinions are held up as though I speak for the entire Black race. Such sweeping generalizations are neither fair to me personally nor to Blacks in general.

* Sometimes I used to think that I was imagining this treatment of isolation. Then I would talk to other Black women about it, and they would talk about it too. It was not just me, but I thought it was, at least for the first year.

* I experience isolation because I am estranged from both Black and White students. White students ignore me because all they see is my blackness. They do not care to know me as a person, as a woman. From other Blacks I am isolated because I am West Indian. I am culturally different (pp. 3-4).

These perceptions are corroborated by the research literature. Joseph Katz (1985), in his discussion about White faculty and the effects of racism, delineated the following array of interactive behaviors and situations reported by African American students about their white faculty: (1) A professor's tone of voice or facial expressions display disbelief or surprise when the African American students respond correctly or otherwise show good performance; (2) Professors offer little guidance and/or criticism of African American students' work; and (3) Professors often make stereotypical comments about African American people without being aware of the impact these comments may have on African American students--particularly when they imply that African American people are less competent than White people.

Six African-American graduate and undergraduate students at a southern university were interviewed to corroborate the experiences so explicitly evident in the literature (Greenman, 1990-91). In addition to overwhelmingly supporting the issues already presented here, these students gave vivid descriptions of total invisibility by recounting ways in which they were completely ignored. Two examples demonstrate:

* I remember many classes where the professor pretended we were not even there. In this one class we all sat together--maybe to remind ourselves that we existed--and the professor never even looked in our direction. We used to joke about it all the time.

* One professor always had time for questions, but raised Black hands were ignored, and when only Black hands were left in the air, there was no more time for questions.

Jacqueline Fleming (1984) found that African American students get the least and White students get the most of their teachers' attention; that is, faculty spend

less time answering questions of African American students. There is mounting evidence that being ignored in the classroom is the major problem African American students experience at predominantly White colleges. They are virtually invisible.

These same observations are supported by evidence from research about the effects on women of masculine generics such as "he," "his," and "man," as in "every student should pick up his assignment" and "the evolution of man." A number of studies (e.g., Bodine, 1975; Kidd, 1971; Miller & Swift, 1976; Moulton, Robi & Elias, 1980) have demonstrated that women "blank out," are unable to form imagery of the given subject, and, in the extreme, feel schizophrenic when masculine generics are used. Other sources of gender bias reportedly include the following:

1. When professors are male, college men engage in more student/faculty interactions than do college women.
2. Professors note and gesture more in response to men's questions over those of women.
3. Male students present themselves more positively during interactions than do women students.
4. Professors are more rewarding when they address men as opposed to women (Allen and Niss, 1990, p. 608).

Such factors certainly support Thorne's suggestion that men (both White and African American) derive an inflated sense of presence and self-importance that accompanies privilege.

The concerns raised here about the intersection of race and gender in the ways faculty teach are also manifested in curricular issues. Curricula do not reflect current research and scholarship on issues about women and people culturally different from the mainstream, nor do they prepare students to successfully participate in a culturally pluralistic/multicultural society (McCarthy, 1990; Wilkerson, 1985-86). Evidence abounds supporting claims that omission of the African American experience from the curriculum incites underlying tensions; African Americans are deprived of acknowledgement and other students are deprived of learning about African Americans (e.g., McCarthy, 1990; Hollins and Spencer, 1990; Crichlow et al., 1990). The fundamental nature of existing curricula must be changed in order to address this problem. To compound these slights, Women's Studies and Black Studies programs typically continue to be administered by White women and African American men, not African American women (Moses, 1989). Hence, the concerns of African American women usually are not heard or, at best, their needs are presumed by others to be known.

Such presumptions further perpetuate negative cultural stereotypes about African American women. Too often the view that African American women are independent, emotionally strong, and capable of taking care of themselves masks the fact that, like White women, African American women have difficulty

asserting themselves in traditionally male-defined settings. Such stereotypes impact the efforts of non-dominant groups to overcome many of the biased student-faculty relations described above. Also, such stereotypes lead to misinterpretations of behavior. For example, Moses (1989) cited evidence that an African American woman's silence may be interpreted as a challenge or as disrespect, while an African American woman's "toughness" sometimes masks uncertainty and vulnerability. This raises the issue of differential interpretation of the same behavior and language exhibited by members of different groups. What is assertive for a man--viewed a strength--is labeled as aggressive in a woman, Black or White, and is deplored.

As to Thorne's second question, What are the effects on the privileged, the mainstream, below are but a few answers:

* Inbreeding of perception;
* Narrow sense of reality;
* Inaccurate science--Data on the few are not generalizable;
* Impoverished culture--Crackers, no cheese.

Most insidious is that members of the mainstream rarely have critical awareness of themselves in a cultural context; they are unaware of their unearned privilege and assume their norms and values are inviolate truth.

Mapping the Mainstream

"Mainstream" is a word inviting those intrigued by metaphor to play; even the authors of the dictionary could not resist, beginning their definition with the words, "the prevailing current." Analyzing the contents and contours of the mainstream as it flows through our educational institutions, is a task with geographical as well as historical aspects. Here, we offer a verbal map: an acronym that spells out clearly the properties of privilege that keep the mainstream flowing, and, by inference, reveals the many dimensions of difference that this mainstream engulfs and ignores--complex, intersecting levels of experience swirling with vitality at the edges of the current of conformity.

The structure of American education and the curricula that inhabit that structure implicitly spell "mainstream" as MY FATHER'S WASP (Bannan, 1991) as depicted in Figure 1. We are not talking here about a formally developed structure and curriculum designed for the purpose of teaching this acronym, but rather the values and orientation that permeate traditional American curricula.

These words represent the dominant, privileged position in several critical categories of difference operating in our culture: gender, age, class, appearance, health, region, handedness, sexuality, race, language, ethnicity, and religion. All of these systems are socially constructed, that is, they are cultural products, ideologically-inspired elaborations of biological, regional or economic differences, drawing hierarchies where reality displays diversity, delineating a di-

chotomy where life presents a continuum. Theorists of diversity (e.g., Hurtado, 1989; King, 1988; Lorde, 1984; and Minnich, 1990) unanimously insist that these various categories of difference are not additive, but interactive, creating complex hybrid forms of discrimination. As historian Gerda Lerner (1990) recently has reminded us, we need to understand that the apparent multiplicity of designations of deviance actually masks a single system of oppression using the old "divide and conquer" technique to reinforce the hierarchy and maintain the power of the dominant. Understanding this helps us to be successful in refusing to allow that ploy to work.

Figure 1

M	male
Y	young
F	financially secure
A	attractive
T	thin and tall
H	healthy
E	Eastern-Establishment
R	right-handed
'S	straight
W	white
A	Anglo
S	Saxon
P	Protestant

Those of us who spell ourselves differently are forced to stretch ourselves to understand this perspective that permeates everything we learn formally. While this adds a burden of otherness to our experience, it also can stimulate growth, if, somewhere in our education, we are given opportunities to develop a sense of the value of our own distinctive voice. Those people who fit the mainstream are privileged, in that they are rarely challenged by a sense of alienation. As Doris Davenport (1989-90) noted, people who are "identifiably 'white'....ostensibly--'free' of specific identifiers" seem to have "no need to identify themselves" (p. 82). However, that privilege has a cost: unconscious narrowness and arrogance inappropriate and limiting in a complex multicultural world.

In this map of the mainstream, all of us can see ourselves, at least potentially at some point in our lives, as both privileged and deviant. This seems to alleviate some of the guilt-induced denial that discussion of privilege often provokes. As Peggy McIntosh (1988) clearly demonstrated, it seems to be much easier to see

someone else's assumed advantage than to admit to one that, unconsciously accepted, benefits us directly. Seeing that right-handed privilege is real somehow makes it easier to admit that white skin privilege exists as well.

The arbitrary nature of these systems of discrimination becomes clearer as we notice that certain dimensions of difference are heavily weighted with meaning in our culture, while others are not as fully elaborated or fraught with consequences in terms of power. Helen Bannan and her students struggled together with the question of whether including dimensions of difference less obviously oppressive, such as region, appearance, and handedness, would trivialize the overwhelming impact of the major systems of oppression built upon the differences of gender, race, class, and sexuality. They decided that formulating the acronym to highlight the major systems of differentiation (as the first letter of each word in the acronym) would underline their importance without imposing a hierarchy of oppression, which was agreed to be counterproductive to our understanding of the interconnectedness of all these factors. The differences based on group identifications (gender, race, class, ethnicity, religion) are more powerful in producing curricular exclusion as well as personal incidents of discrimination. The individually-based differences of appearance create self-fulfilling prophecies of stereotypical expectations, so they impact on educational experience in a more directly personal way. All contribute, however, to a vision of the mainstream as a rapidly flowing confluence of conformity.

The particular river on which we are focusing in this paper, the American educational and curricular mainstream, has been carving its channel for a long time. Formal schooling in our earliest history was an experience entirely limited to those who spelled their identity in letters matching the first and last words of the acronym: Male, Young, White Anglo Saxon Protestant, plus Financially Secure, creating the very beginnings of the Eastern Establishment. When, in the 19th century, the system stretched to educate others--women, African Americans, Native Americans, immigrants, etc.--they were approached very pointedly as outsiders to be converted; the curriculum expressed a kind of Nativist democratic faith, and the teachers, often very consciously, acted as its missionaries. Some of the best of the teachers, individually, attempted to validate the worth of their students by conjuring a vision of a melting pot that took the best characteristics of its diverse contents, and blended them in a new American alloy. The image of the melting pot was popularized in the late nineteenth century, though the idea had its roots in the work of Crevecoeur in the Revolutionary period (Crevecoeur, 1782; Kraut, 1982; Prucha, 1973; Weiss, 1982).

The emphasis was always on conformity to the standard set by the beliefs of those who could unequivocally state, "MY FATHER'S WASP," however. The same textbooks and courses shaped students in schools and colleges coast to coast; for example, in the late nineteenth century Indian Commissioner Thomas J. Morgan introduced into BIA schools a standardized curriculum that was modeled

after that used in Ohio. Indian schools also emphasized industrial education, training students for manual and domestic labor, actualizing racist beliefs about Indian employment potential by providing only that sort of training (Prucha, 1976). African Americans experienced similar tracking, though the influence of W. E. B. Du Bois led to some emphasis on academic excellence for the "talented tenth" (Altschuler, 1982). Congruently, this same era also witnessed the birth of many strongly academic women's colleges, and of home economics as a discipline that aimed to improve the status and scientific credibility of the sphere to which most women were relegated, regardless of their education (Solomon, 1985). These efforts to adapt the curriculum to recognize differences were clearly motivated by the perspective of the dominant group, which kept the waters of the MY FATHER'S WASP mainstream free from any "polluting" influences of others, except for the few token individuals allowed to tread water as best they could if they would move along with the current.

By the nineteen twenties, some thinkers, writers, and teachers, prominent among them Horace Kallen, whose identity was spelled with different letters, developed the idea of cultural pluralism, substituting the romantic image of a symphony, or the mundane one of salad bowl, for the industrialized vision of pouring molten steel (Kallen, 1924; Gordon, 1964). In both symphony and salad, each constituent part retains its characteristics, while contributing to the tone or flavor of the whole. These ideas had some impact on schools dominated by the different; for instance, Indian schools began in the nineteen thirties to include teaching some traditional arts. By and large, however, "on flowed the river," the MY FATHER'S WASP mainstream.

The very velocity and strength of this flow enables it to carry much solid material: what might appear to be simply the flotsam and jetsam of individual idiosyncratic differences, when viewed from a broader perspective, can be seen to constitute the topsoil of many different traditions, enough "sediment," as it were, to construct new continents of understanding. As we moved to the later decades of the twentieth century, many groups of the different began redefining their differences in positive terms and insisting that the standard curriculum teach all students, not just their own children. A vision of a multicultural world, and the values of diversity appeared to be emerging, but these visions and values have yet to become reality.

Solutions

The Individual's Power to Transform

Prejudice and discrimination are not innate, rather they are learned--passed down as part of a cultural legacy:

You've go to be taught to hate and fear,
You've got to be taught from year to year,
It's got to be drummed in your little ear--
You've got to be carefully taught!
You've got to be taught to be afraid
Of people whose eyes are oddly made,
And people whose skin is a different shade--
You've got to be carefully taught.
You've got to be taught before it's too late,
Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives hate--
You've got to be carefully taught!
You've got to be carefully taught!
(Rogers and Hammerstein, 1949, pp. 136-137)

Although we are "carefully taught" the implicit and explicit cultural world view, we, as individuals, can transform our cultural legacy. The following report by an African American student of one professor's influence on her success is illustrative:

> As a graduate student, I was basically ignored. The only exception to this was one tenured professor, a Black man, who consistently encouraged me even though I was not in his program. I took only one course from him but he...encouraged my scholarship. He also published and gave me credit for two case studies I had completed for his class. He was one of the main reasons I stayed on. (in Moses, 1989, 3-4)

While most psychologists who have dealt with explanations of change have acknowledged the dangers of reductionism to the individual, they also have asserted the importance of such an analysis as part of multi-level theory building about change. Kurt Lewin introduced to psychology the force field model of change in which the status quo is not the static situation it appears, but rather a place held firm by dynamic forces that are equal in power as they clash against each other. He called the forces pushing the individual toward change the "driving forces" and those against, the "restraining forces" and argued that the most effective way to institute change was to melt the resistance rather than add to the driving forces. He was convinced that planned change was difficult but possible.

Chris Argyris (1982) and Donald Schön (1978) were less sanguine about that possibility. They outlined a cycle of events wherein new concepts and values were incorporated only to the degree that they perpetuated the system of ideas and values extant. Only a nuclear blast could dislodge the existing set of beliefs and values that underlie human behavior. Thus, psychologists have contended that while the nature of things is to change, the more they change the more they stay the same. Or, as various therapists have asserted, only when staying the same is far more

painful than adopting alternative behaviors, will clients stop resisting what's good for them.

Against such gloomy explanations of resistance to change--in this case the opening of education to "outsiders" as named by Bannan--two lines of recent research in social psychology offer hope that an in-group **can** change its attitudes toward an out-group and that this change can be expedited. As such, they illuminate personal pathways to overcoming institutional inertia and, in turn, suggest ways institutions can assist individuals within to facilitate greater openness to diversity.

The first research (Linville, Salovey, and Fischer, 1989) was a series of four studies, wherein traditional approaches to analyzing stereotyping were challenged and which demonstrated that people do not think about broad social categories in terms of a unitary stereotype, that is, a list of prototypical traits. Three experiments showed that greater familiarity of individuals with a category (or group) leads to greater perceived differentiation and variability. (It is interesting to note here that differentiation among out-group members is valued and contributes to dispelling stereotypes, while rigid or limited differentiation between the in-group and an out-group actually contributes to the creation of stereotypes.) We learn to see our differences. This greater familiarity operates even when the characterization is about an out-group--that is, it is not out-group status per se that leads to stereotyping, but familiarity or lack thereof that contributes more to stereotyping.

Specifically, in their experiments, groups of old versus young, Irish versus American, and male versus female evaluated themselves and each other. While older and younger and Irish and American groups stereotyped each other--that is failed to differentiate--males versus females did not. All three pairs constituted in and out groups, but only the first two were relatively unfamiliar with each other, lending support to the notion that familiarity is a key in the dissipation of stereotyping and contradiction of traditional notions of out-group homogeneity based on social group membership.

In their fourth study, Linville *et al.* (1989) varied familiarity directly by measuring students in a class over the semester, asking them to evaluate class members on various traits. As their familiarity with each other increased over the term, the differentiation and variability of their perceptions increased as predicted. (Although they became **less** favorable over time--to know them is not necessarily to love them...) This contradicts the assertion that greater familiarity with one's in-group accounts for greater in-group favoritism.

Linville *et al.* (1989) concluded by offering a model for the way our concepts about a category, here a social group, are encoded or stored. It is beyond the scope of this discussion to elaborate the model, in which learning and memory play a central role, and its testing via a computer simulation, but suffice it to say that the investigators did just that and felt that the results provide a cognitive basis for the differential familiarity hypothesis. However, their results also showed a concave impact of familiarity that indicates that, "...although greater familiarity with a

category provides the **opportunity** for the perceiver to form a more differentiated or variable representation of a category, it does not ensure that one will do so" (p. 175). There are caveats, of course. Familiarity is only one process, and there are undoubtedly other motivational and cognitive processes that play a role in social categorization. Their model implies that in-group/out-group differences will be greater when perceivers are more familiar with their in-group, as in the case of young versus old or American versus Irish groups. Other lines of research note that familiarity or exposure add an evaluative component so that this "piece" can be combined into increasingly comprehensive models to account for prejudice from a cognitive perspective.

To summarize, Linville *et al.*'s (1989) approach to stereotyping can be viewed in terms of the statistical properties of beliefs about members of social categories. For example, measures of central tendency detect systematic bias and become measures of prejudice. The differentiation measures indicate the likelihood that a perceiver will distinguish among group members on a trait and thus detect overgeneralizations about group members. Variability may reflect another type of stereotyping, or show the tendency to see group members as lying at two extremes. Using all three measures thus permits us to tap different aspects of prejudice and stereotyping and gives a "richer impression of the 'pictures in our heads'" (p. 187). Further, this reasoning and method suggest that the success of intergroup contact should be evaluated in terms of both fostering more favorable **and** more differentiated perceptions.

If understanding how we become able to deal with differences is our goal, the work of social psychologists using models of information processing may provide a key. Lack of differentiated thinking about a group permits more extreme evaluations of individual group members, stronger inferences from one member to the group, and out-group discrimination. Thus, promoting differential thinking about group members may be a useful strategy for altering stereotypes. Feminists, for example, come in all packages: Black, White, old, young, short, tall, male, female, etc. As an individual encounters more and more feminists--has greater familiarity--it is less likely that they can be stereotyped or lumped into one likeness except where they indeed are alike: all hold the belief that women and men are of equal value.

The second line of research to be described here is that of Patricia Devine (1989). Many classical and contemporary theorists have suggested that prejudice is an inevitable consequence of categorization (stereotyping), thus positing the "inevitability of prejudice;" so long as stereotypes exist, prejudice will follow. Stereotypes are automatically applied to members of stereotyped groups, and knowledge of the stereotype is equated with prejudice toward that group. This perspective has serious import since no one is without a social heritage that transmits attitudes and stereotypes about one's own and other groups. Devine and others argue instead that stereotypes and beliefs are distinct cognitive structures.

She reports three studies that challenge the "inevitability of prejudice" framework, studies that distinguish stereotypes from beliefs and the automatic or involuntary from the controlled or voluntary processes of cognition. As in the previous research, Devine draws on information processing work. Automatic processes involve the spontaneous activation of some well learned associations in memory, but have been shown to be replaceable by conscious intentions to evoke a different or new response under certain experimental conditions. The inhibition of automatic associations, however, requires both enough time and cognitive capacity.

There is strong evidence in children that stereotypes are well established in memory before the children develop the cognitive ability to question their validity or acceptability (e.g., Allport, 1954; Katz, 1976). This means that stereotypes are older and more accessible than personal beliefs. Devine's (1989) model assumes that high- and low-prejudiced persons are equally knowledgeable of cultural stereotypes, but differ in their beliefs about them. Low-prejudiced people have consciously **decided** a stereotype is inappropriate and thus experience a conflict between the automatic, culturally transmitted stereotype and their personal opinion of it. Such overt nonprejudiced responses require intentional inhibition of the automatic stereotype and intentional activation of nonprejudicial responses. However, if an individual is unaware that the stereotype is being activated, that activated stereotype may result in unintentional coloring of their beliefs and behavior. The implication of this automatic stereotype activation is serious, particularly when the stereotype is negative.

In the first study, Devine (1989) demonstrated that, indeed, high- and low-prejudiced individuals are equally knowledgeable of cultural stereotypes, a previously undocumented finding. Study two examined automatic stereotyping priming effects for high- and low-prejudiced individuals. Research participants evaluated ambiguously hostile behaviors after arousal of the stereotype of Blacks (as hostile). Briefly, participants were exposed at below the recognition level either to a list of 80 racial (Black) prime words such as Black, aggressive, basketball, poor, etc., to 20 neutral words or a list of 20 prime versus 80 neutral words, thus activating to a greater or lessor degree the racial stereotype. This occurred while they engaged in a vigilance task as a distractor. Following this, they read the classic "Donald" paragraph, a 12-sentence passage that portrays Donald, whose race is unspecified, as engaging in a series of empirically established hostile behaviors.

As expected, the level of activation of automatic stereotypes impacted high- and low-prejudiced participants equally. The 80-prime word list led to greater evaluations of hostility of Donald's behavior than the 20-prime word list for high- and low-prejudiced individuals alike. Here, the ability to consciously monitor stereotype activation was precluded. Thus, when stereotypes are automatically engendered, they may have effects that are inaccessible to the individual.

Study 3, the good news, demonstrated that, in contrast, when the conflict

between a nonprejudiced personal belief and a stereotype is made salient, low-prejudiced persons are motivated to reaffirm their nonprejudiced self-concepts. They denounce the stereotype and express their contrasting belief. In this study, students anonymously listed their thoughts about Blacks as a racial group. The high-prejudiced group listed many negative traits and were less likely to describe beliefs, while the low-prejudiced students listed few traits, but many beliefs, such as, "It's unfair to judge people by their color, they should be seen as individuals." What is significant here is that even though their identity was unknown, low-prejudiced individuals thought carefully about their responses to ensure that they did not contain stereotypes or prejudice, despite the fact that the stereotype was aroused by the task of writing about Blacks as a race. They censored the stereotypes so activated in favor of beliefs they had about these stereotypes. Moreover, they were reluctant to ascribe traits, positive or negative, to a group that would imply that all members of that group were alike in some way other than the color of their skin. They differentiated among the out-group members *á la* Linville *et al.* (1989).

Some have argued that automatic responses are independent of conscious beliefs--that in fact all White Americans are prejudiced toward African Americans, and nonprejudiced behaviors are just forms of impression management (cover ups for socially undesirable attitudes). Such an argument denies the possibility for change in beliefs, despite changes in words or rhetoric. Devine's (1989) model of the power of controlled processes to inhibit the automatic, in contrast, shows this power to be the key to escape prejudice. We are all victims of being limited capacity processors. We cannot attend to all aspects of a situation. When the controlled processes are precluded or interfered with, automatic processing occurs, and early learned stereotypes are activated and impact our behavior. But prejudiced responses are like bad habits--they **can** be broken. To do this, to resist resistance to equalitarian attitudes, the individual must: 1) decide to stop the old belief (behavior), 2) remember this resolution, and 3) try repeatedly and decide repeatedly to eliminate the habit and replace it with a rival, new belief in diversity as desirable.

More specifically, individual faculty and administrators can challenge their narrow spelling of MY FATHER'S WASP and behave in classrooms and on campus in ways that mentor and empower their constituents rather than diminish them.

Structural Sites for Transforming Institutions

As educators in an educational system that has been guided by psychology, we are reasonably comfortable personalizing issues. Thus, individual commitment to the elimination of prejudice and discrimination appears credible. Where, however, is the link between individual behavior and structural issues?

We scholars in the foundations of education are usually aware of the structure

of education and schooling in philosophical and socio-cultural contexts; we know that education is a socio-cultural institution; it consists of a life-long process of organized patterns of behavior that constitute learning. Education is culturally defined--institutionalized differently in different cultures. In Western society it traditionally takes the form of schooling in places called schools, though we recently have reaffirmed the importance of learning that happens beyond the school walls. We teach the ramifications of the contexts of learning to our students. Are we aware of the metaphors we choose for our perceptions of and interactions with reality? Are we aware of the overshadowing influence of MY FATHER'S WASP? We, the authors, contend that developing awareness of one's cultural world view provides structural access points to open educational institutions to diverse groups.

The automatic stereotype discussed earlier in this paper does not just address the obvious differences such as the skin color and other physical characteristics we often erroneously equate with culture, rather it addresses the subtle differences that challenge taken-for-granted aspects of culture. "Any individual's cognitive structure is a working model of the cultural system of which she or he is a part," (Spindler, 1976, p. 81). Not only must individuals examine themselves critically in their cultural contexts, but they must also examine the institutions they created and perpetuate. Aspects of structure that inhibit change and are incongruent with the rhetoric supporting diversity continually must be identified and addressed rather than seen as the only right and logical way to proceed. Examples of the need for doing this abound in the fragmented manner in which public schools are restructured and in the rhetoric of restructuring. Examples also are evident in the often weak efforts of institutions of higher learning to incorporate diversity.

The reductionist, segmented, dualistic nature of the prevailing world view seems to dictate that we perceive and define the problems in dealing with differences as isolated from other aspects of the system. Thus, changes become partial modifications rather than whole structural change. This is what Watzlawick, Weakland, and Fisch (1974) term first-order change, wherein a group or system articulates a problem from within the parameters of its basic assumptions, thereby projecting solutions from that same frame of reference. The derived solution, as a linear extension of the stated problem, inadvertently perpetuates the problem, so the more things change, the more they stay the same. This type of change is, then, internally derived; it occurs within invariant groups or systems. The criteria against which the participants in the system, and the very system itself, are evaluated are inconsistent with the nature of the desired changes.

Thus, we profess the desire for change and innovation, but often we are not willing to challenge the personal and structural barriers. As John Kenneth Galbraith said, "Faced with having to change our views or prove that there is no need to do so, most of us get busy on the proof," (in Ferguson, 1980, p. 197). Moses (1990) suggested that nothing short of a total rethinking or transformation of the

campus might accomplish professed goals of transforming curricula to be more inclusive of White women and people of color.

Clearly, viable structural, educational, institutional, and sociocultural innovations necessitate Watzlawick, Weakland, and Fisch's (1974) second-order change. Rather than a linear projection, this level of change embodies a discontinuity or transformation, providing a way out of the previously delineated system. It is a change of change that requires a reframing of the problem. The solutions thus generated are not necessarily logical from the parameters of the existing system or within the old perception of the problem. Groups or systems involved in second-order change are necessarily dynamic rather than self perpetuating.

Until we develop a conceptualization of the future as we would have it, and use this conceptualization to guide education and society in the present, no educational reform or societal change in pursuit of democracy of any significance is really possible (Shive, 1980). As delineated for individual volition in combating prejudice earlier in this paper, it appears that we must recognize where we are, state the assumptions, challenge them, and transform them. Fritz's (1984) concept of maintaining "structural tension" provides viable guidelines: 1) envision, 2) choose to achieve that vision--make a commitment, 3) be critically aware of where we are, and 4) continually reassess the current reality and refine the vision, constantly maintaining that structural tension between the two. The current procedure is to either let go of the vision or let go of the commitment to achieve it. At present, "progress" toward the vision unfortunately is evaluated against the criteria of the old system, thus sustaining institutional inertia. What is needed is evaluation against criteria congruent with the vision.

If the American world view must be scientifically validated, there are now principles based on scientific research that support an emerging paradigm or shift in that elusive "form of a form of thought." Quantum mechanics, the theory of chaos, new brain research, and biological, chemical, and environmental research all suggest that the essential principles of the universe and human beings include process, complexity, integration, interconnection, and unbroken wholeness. This emerging paradigm, then, supports the notion that complexity and diversity are as valid as sameness and simplicity. It also holds that all of the disparate elements are interconnected, that we can reframe the problem of conceptualizing, defining, and actualizing institutional change so that it can be approached as an unbroken whole.

Such an emerging paradigm allows the process to be just that--a process. Thus, education and society become engaged in an unending process of transformation--they become self renewing entities, embodying the scientific principle of a universe in process. The expanded criteria for success are an integral part of the transformative process.

The resources and expertise for achieving such change are readily available on university campuses. Many faculty and staff independently implement such change on a small scale. They are committed to a vision of diversity. We must

recognize this individual human action as a first step toward transforming institutions. It is incumbent upon those who share their vision similarly to take action, and upon all of us to work toward changing the structures rather than working around them.

Summary

Frederick Erickson (1987) defined the task as analysis and searching out of all possible sites in which transformation can occur. We have here recognized and articulated those often taken-for-granted or overlooked spaces within and surrounding individuals and institutions where prejudice and discrimination lurk, and have looked at perpetuation of that discrimination through the dynamic between individuals and institutions. We have offered examples of the ways in which prejudice, discrimination, and constricted world views manifest themselves and impact individuals in educational institutions. Finally, we have offered sites where individuals can challenge and transform themselves and their institutions. It is our hope that individual commitment to individual and institutional change will follow. We **can** transform resistance into celebration of diversity.

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